SEE

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OPINION

With the great nations blaring their messages across space the quieter aspects of international address do not seem very urgent. Shall we worry about the pictures we show at next year's New York World's Fair when, who knows, it may take a flotilla of destroyers to escort them there? . . .

These pictures we are building up to send overseas may be just as important as the noisy interventions from Godesberg and elsewhere. People were asking, everywhere, where Britain stood in the present war of ideas. . . . One felt that ultimate alliances depended upon that answer.

—*See pages* 254–255

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Bernard Shaw's PYGMALION

The eagerly awaited film, with Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller, exclusively reviewed for SEE by David Thompson

DURING the last few months Mr. Anthony Asquith and Mr. Leslie Howard have donned the guise of movie Pygmalions to bring Mr. George Bernard Shaw's Galatea to life. To carry the analogy further, Messieurs Asquith and Howard have transfused the warm blood of movie life into a pre-war play.

Given the brilliantly perceptive dialogue, the ploughing over of human sub-soil, which is Mr. Shaw's métier, the golden touch of men of perception has transformed *Pygmalion*.

Perhaps the major credit is due to Gabriel Pascal who saw the play's rich possibilities as movie material, given the craftsmen to make it move. It is to his credit that, having this insight, he should have selected a team of translators who have so superbly carried out his conception.

The making of the film has a long history—the securing of Bernard Shaw's collaboration, the putting together of finance at the time of the British film industry's collapse—this last was a triumph over insuperable odds. These things are to the credit of Gabriel Pascal. He has the ingenuity of a jesuit with the rich faith that inspires the jesuit. He needed a jesuitical mind to produce a film while the British film industry was tumbling into chaos. Perhaps no one can assess its tonic importance some months ago when all seemed lost in British films. At that time it caused a revival of financial faith.

Mr. Pascal calls Captain Richard Norton, of Pinewood Studios, where *Pygmalion* was made, "my dearest English friend". It would be only just for Captain Norton to get down on his knees and thank God for Mr. Pascal. The production of this only major film made during the early part of this year must have done much to restore financial confidence. That is seemingly a minor achievement, but there is little confidence in films and in this case faith carried the day and we got a stimulation in British production. Number One Credit to Mr. Pascal.

Number Two Credit for entrusting *Pygmalion* to Mr. Anthony Asquith as director. Asquith has had all the bad breaks the industry can give—production compromise, bad stories, inadequate casts, hack jobs and lackey jobs, but all through his film history he has preserved a directorial integrity. Whenever his films have failed to click—like *Carnival*—whenever they have been popular, there was always some touch of distinction, there was always a director's hand.

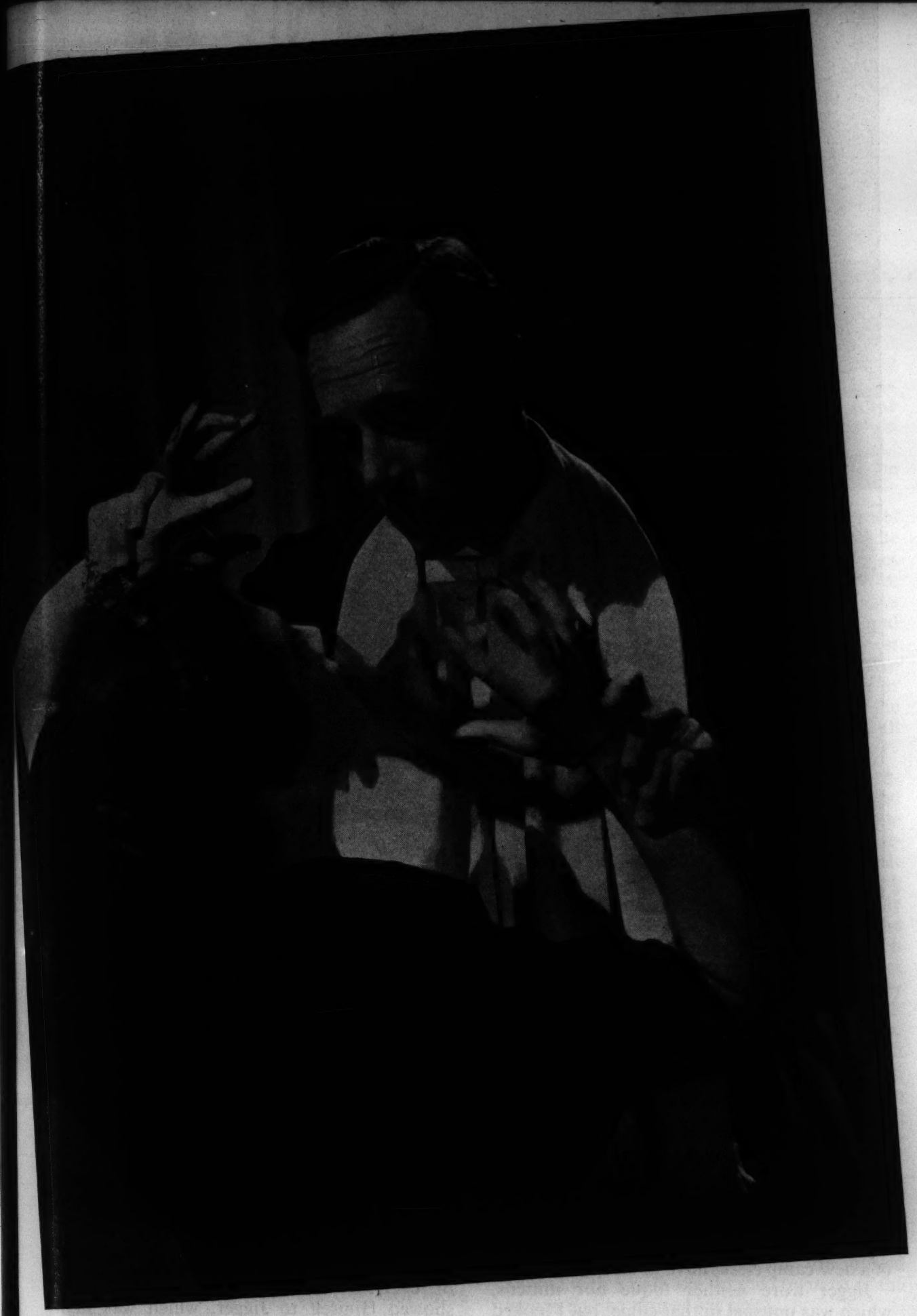
It has at times been too delicate; on occasions its effects have been too self-consciously obtained, but there has always been that director's wagging finger to determine the shape of sequences, to determine the content of the screen. The highest virtue a director has is his ability to tell a story; Mr. Asquith is a spinner of stories.

Part of the credit for the making of this film is due to Leslie Howard, for it was his belief in British films that made the picture possible. He foreswore Hollywood contracts and jeopardised his reputation by remaining off the screen for a long period so that *Pygmalion* should be made. He has co-directed the film with Anthony Asquith and has brought his wide knowledge of the best movie traditions to this department.

To all the unit working on this picture goes full marks for the most polished film yet made in Britain. In every technical department the work is flawless. Units brought together for the making of one film tend to produce scrappy results (as instanced by the one-picture habit of to-day's British film industry), but the team spirit engendered by the producers in the making of this film has resulted in a homogeneity which might be the product of a modern American studio. Technically, one cannot praise higher than that.

As a film it is cast-iron Box Office. The story is the good old Cinderella theme, made to measure for the cinema and used countless times in different dress. Mr. Shaw's dramatic dress was very different and the film preserves a great deal of the play's rich qualities of human insight. To the writer, a film motivated by mental reactions is one alien to his conception of movies, but the rich human observation reawakens an interest in people's character. The success in this direction, however, makes for a greater interest in the theatre. That is perhaps the film's greatest triumph and at the same time its greatest weakness. On the one hand it is a superb translation of the stage to the screen—better done than ever before and made into real movie—and yet for the progressive movie it puts up no signposts. If it is movie's only job to entertain, then this film does it brilliantly. Every class, from the eight and sixpennies to the fourpennies, will find their entertainment here. The direction has so dramatized the interplay of human relationships, that when Eliza Doolittle, having been transformed from flower girl to duchess, walks into her first reception that walk is as finely dramatic as any wild west hero riding to the rescue.

The characters are all drawn and played



PYGMALION

With:
LESLIE HOWARD
WENDY HILLER
WILFRID LAWSON
ESME PERCY

Produced by:
GABRIEL PASCAL

Directed by:
ANTHONY ASQUITH and
LESLIE HOWARD

Original Story and Dialogue by:
BERNARD SHAW

Scenario by:
W. P. LIPSCOMB and
CECIL LEWIS

Production Manager:
PHIL C. SAMUEL

Sets designed by:
LAWRENCE IRVING

Assistant Art Director:
JOHN BRYAN

Film Editor:
DAVID LEAN

Camera:
JACK HILDYARD

Original Music by:
ARTHUR HONEGGER

Photography by:
HARRY STRADLING

Assistant Director:
TEDDY BAIRD

Recordist:
ALEX FISHER

larger than life, and yet there is this human quality about them all. Their little vulgar aspirations, their little class ideals, the realization of which is going to have every audience sitting on the edge of its seat.

Pygmalion pushes along like an express. There is only one place in the film where it becomes evident that it is built on dialogue. This place is the penultimate scene between Professor Higgins and Eliza. It would not hurt to prune this sequence down to the first four or five exchanges of dialogue to establish the superficial antagonism. With this section trimmed, the film should race to its end and, if audiences are what they were, they should be standing up and cheering.

Nice things in the film are: Wilfrid Lawson as Eliza's dustman father in the earlier sequences, as nice a piece of caricatured character as seen in recent months; the visual establishment of Leslie Howard as Professor Higgins, elocution expert; the reticence in exploiting the line which made the play famous; the inspired acting of Wendy Hiller in a part where she must convey physical attractiveness with which she is not physically endowed; the excellent casting of the minor parts; the dextrous mixing of real exteriors (particularly happy is Professor Higgins' crossing of Piccadilly Circus); the excellence of the Covent Garden sequence; sets, photography and disposition of crowds.

Bad things in the film are: the over-acting of Esmé Percy (though probably safe for the provinces); the dialogue sequence mentioned before; the colourless housekeeper of Professor Higgins; the painted backing of the Covent Garden scene; the occasional pomposity of the sets.

All the bad things, however, are minor, and do not detract from one of the best films ever made in Britain.

THE SAGA of JIGGER JONES . .

From Stewart Holbrook's
'Holy Old Mackinaw',
a natural history of
the American Lumberjack,
and the finest piece of
documentary reporting
this year.

(Courtesy High Commissioner for Can

It was told of Jigger Jones that when he was a young head-chopper in the Maine woods some fifty years ago he would walk a felled spruce, barefoot, and kick off every knot from butt to top. That was before my time in the timber, and I never saw him do it, yet all who knew The Jigger, even in his old age, doubted the report not at all. He was what loggers meant when they said "a rugged man", and he was almost but not quite indestructible.

Jigger Jones also was almost the last of his race—that race of men who cut a swath of timber from eastern Maine to western Oregon and yelled like crazed devils every spring, when the drive was in and they were released from the savage woods for a few days, as they pounded the bars in Bangor, Saginaw, St. Paul and Seattle.

Jigger didn't know it, of course, but his life and especially his death had the dignity and tragedy of a classic pattern. Into them were packed all the three hundred years of experience it required to produce and destroy a unique and mighty race of men. Some of that tribe, as in Jigger's case, were killed physically by civilisation; as for the others, civilisation has mowed them down spiritually —removing the high, wild colour from their lives, ironing flat their personalities, and reducing them to the status of proletarians. The professors would term Jigger's brief story an epitome, and so it was.

I didn't catch up with Jigger Jones until early in 1910. It was at a logging camp in northern New England, and the weather was around thirty-five below, accounted fair coolish even in those parts. Jigger was standing in the camp yard when I, a young punk of a new camp clerk, hove in on the tote team.

Jigger wore neither toque nor mittens, which was unusual in that clime, but I looked first of all at his feet, to know by witness if the legends I had heard about him were true. They were. The Jigger was barefoot. He walked up and down on the packed, creaking snow, passing the time of day with the teamster, and occasionally he would stop and stand on one leg like a stork, rubbing one foot against his pants leg. It was a fact that he never wore socks, summer or winter, except on rare and state occasions such as funerals, when he felt that he should put on all the style possible. Around camp he commonly went barefoot, although he would pull on a pair of shoepacks or rubbers when he went into the woods to take charge of the crew. A red woollen undershirt and drawers and a pair of heavy pants completed his outfit.

Jigger was an excellent foreman in the old tradition. Like all those old camp bosses, he was no mere cog in an industrial machine, a number on a payroll. Jigger was an individual who stood upon his two hind legs and asked no quarter from Man, Capital, or even God, in the form God usually showed Himself to Jigger, which was high water, deep snow, or a thaw in January.

None other than Jigger Jones is credited with the famous lumberjack slogan that would put any chamber of commerce to shame. If on arrival in a new camp he happened to be well oiled, as was usually the case, he was given to letting the boys know about it by roaring "I can run faster, jump higher, squat lower, move sideways quicker, and spit further than any son-of-a-bitch in camp." This genial announcement was always made in good humour, but in good faith as well. If he couldn't live up to quite all of it, he could come near enough to cause grave consideration in the minds of those who thought otherwise.

As a camp push, or foreman, he had few equals. He knew, for instance, when it was going to rain, snow, or freeze at least twenty-fours hours before it happened, no small feat in New England Quebec. When asked what signs he used, he said all he knew about the weather was what he read in the forecasts in *Ayer's Almanac*. He knew to a day, almost, when the ice would go out of any of the stream's tributary to the Kennebec, the Androscoggin and the Connecticut; and he knew men and timber. A notable slave-driver, nevertheless he would walk into saloons in Berlin, New Hampshire, or Sherbrooke, Quebec, and impress a sizeable crew of drunk and fighting *habitants* to go with him to drive the Nulhegan, one of the most dangerous streams for cant-dog men in the North country. Without pencil or paper he would cruise casually through forty acres of mixed fir and spruce, and come out with an accurate estimate of the eventual log scale of both species.

With an axe handle or sawed-off peavey he often faced a rebellious crew and offered to kill, not to lick, them all; but he knew he had only to break a few skulls to quell the mutiny. He never cut wages until he was forced to by higher-ups; and on at least one occasion he purposely misunderstood orders from the head office to make a ten per cent slice on a certain November 1st, and did not put the pay reduction into effect. Men got scarce later that season, and many camps went shorthanded, but Jigger's crew was complete and happy. His only explanation of his foresight was that he had read in *Ayer's Almanac* "where it says we was goin' to have a shortage of choppers this-a-year." All his references to the almanac, of course, were satirical. He never looked inside one and was sure that anyone who did was haywire.

JIGGER JONES was christened Albert at the time of his birth in Maine, in the early 1870's, but few knew him as anything but The Jigger, a name whose origin has been lost in the imperfect history of woodsmen. And it seemed to all young loggers that there had never been a time, no matter how remote, when one hadn't heard of Jigger Jones and his doings. His life and works had been so mighty that he existed part real, part myth, from the 'eighties until violent death did him in near a White Mountain village in 1935.

He was a small man, standing not more than five-feet-six, and he weighed around one-hundred-and-forty pounds. He was strong. In his middle years he would pick up a drum of gasolene from the ground and slap it into the back of a tote-team body. He was actually as quick as a cat. These two gifts contributed considerably to his life span, but they were useless in the face of the machine age.

After one term in a district school, Jigger went directly to work in a logging camp, as cookee or cook's helper, at the tender age of twelve. But Jigger wasn't tender at twelve; he was rugged.

Conversation among the crew at mealtime was strictly forbidden. One night some new men, carrying noble hang-overs, heaved into camp just in time for supper. One of them insisted on talking loudly at table. Jigger, dutiful, told him to shut up. The fellow, twice young Jigger's size, swung off the seat, struck the boy, and floored him. Then he jumped on Jigger and began pounding him. Jigger hugged the big drunk close, set his keen young teeth into an ear, and hung on. When some of the crew pried the pair apart, a good hunk of the ear remained in Jigger's mouth. Between two men of equal age and size this incident would have created no more than polite interest; but the youth and grit of the young cookee made it something special. So in honour of the occasion the crew passed the hat and bought Jigger a fine new red woollen shirt to replace the one torn in the scrap, and a full pound of B. & L. Black, a favourite chewing tobacco of the time.

Jigger soon graduated from the cookhouse. Having used an axe since he could walk, he did not require the usual preparatory courses of swamping out roads, knotting felled trees, but hired out as a chopper. In those days saws were not used for felling timber and axemen took great pride in the smoothness of the scarf of their undercut. Jigger's was like a planed board. He learned to fell a spruce or pine so that, in falling, it would drive a stake previously set in the ground. In no time at all he was a head-chopper.

Jigger had not thought, probably, of learning the business and of working upward and onward, but due rather to his restlessness he next became what was known as a hair-pounder, or teamster. He liked the excitement of sliding down ice-hard roads, standing upright on the long logs, and yelling bloody hell at his four horses. But he didn't like the bother of putting on the bridle chains which were placed around the sled runners to act as a brake on the steep hills. On one frosty morning on Swift Diamond Stream, he took a hill with a big load and no bridle chains. The load was too great for the team. With sparks of fire flashing from their hoofs and the devilish yelling of Jigger in their ears, the frightened animals tried to keep ahead of the sled, but could not. The weight and momentum of the monstrous load rushed them off the glaring road and into the timber, where the logs piled on top of them, and on top of Jigger, like great jackstraws. Three of the horses were dead, a fourth had a broken leg and so had Jigger. Jigger killed the injured animal with a pole axe. In the language of the woods he had sluiced his team.

Sluicing a team is likely to hang over a logger for a long time. Its shadow, indeed, is something akin to that cast in other circles by the failure to touch second base in a World's Series. But Jigger lived it down. By the time he was twenty years old he was put in charge of a camp on the Androscoggin River.

OLD-TIMERS have told that Jigger's first season as a camp push was something to go down in the annals. He was the smallest man in camp, and of course, in those days, he had to fight and lick half a dozen "able" men before he got his feet on solid ground. He did this with neatness and a fine show of imagination. Although he denied its truth in later years, tradition has it that he hit one of the tough lads over the head with a peavey and then rolled the body into the river as though it had been a log. "That story is a goddam 'zaggeration," Jigger protested.

In any case, he had been in a heap of fights. On the rare occasions when he made any pretence at bathing, I was impressed by the deep marks of "loggers' smallpox" all over his chest, shoulders, and stomach—the work of many steel-calked boots stamped there by opponents. That his face was entirely free from such marks was attributed to the fear in which men held Jigger's teeth. "When I got holt on a feller's ankle," he recounted with relish, "I chawed clean through boot, hide, an' all."

Yet there wasn't an ounce of venom in his soul. In a tribe of traditionally generous men, he was outstanding. Literally, he would give the red woollen shirt off his back to the first friend or the first no-good bum who came along. He considered it ethically indefensible for any man to leave for camp, from town, until he had spent his last dollar, lost his hat, and awakened with his coat pleated from sleeping against a radiator in some river-front hotel. And when Jigger wanted to go to town, he never used the standard excuse of loggers—"I want to get my teeth fixed." Jigger said: "I'm going down to get fixed up."

One of Jigger's greatest contributions to the logging industry was the virile and amusing profanity he always had on tap. He could and did damn a person or a thing in a manner that made the Pope's excommunication sound like a recommendation of character. But he never used—at least in his more mature years—vulgar and shopworn phrases like "blue-eyed, bandy-legged, jumped-up ol' whistlin' Jesus H. Mackinaw Christ." Such ejaculations, he held, were sacrilegious. Unfortunately, because of its phallic and other anatomical references, little of his bluest and best billingsgate can be reproduced. Much of it was interesting in that it connected various biblical characters, of whose history he knew little, with references to things known to all woodsmen.

One of the worst things he could call a man embodied an allusion to the *pediculis pubis*, with which he claimed the patient Job had been afflicted. Of a logger who was notably unkempt, Jigger said that he was "dirtier than the combined britches of Matthew, Mark, Lute (sic) and John." Of another logger he would say, with just a trace of envy, that he was a "bigger picaroon man than ol' King Solomon himself."

He might term a very lazy man "a reg'lar Joel's jilpoke." If he wished to indicate that something or other was very broad he would say that it was broader than a certain part of the anatomy of Amos. Diligent search of the Bible leaves these connections obscure, and it was probably Jigger's love of alliteration that brought them into being.

In the realm of alcohol Jigger stood alone. His drinking abilities passed all belief, unless one had seen them displayed over a period of

(*Continued on next page*)

Continuing—'The Saga of Jigger Jones'

Roaring Timber (*Columbia*)

years. He actually drank everything from clear grain alcohol to canned heat, and from horse liniment to painkiller; that is, everything except champagne and cocktails, both of which he held to be injurious to the stomach and kidneys.

Speaking of Jigger's stomach, I shall never forget the March morning in 1920 when I left Jigger's camp. The thermometer was down "two feet below zero" that morning. Jigger, sleeping in a bunk across from mine, sat up on the edge of the bed in his bright vermilion underwear. He reached under his bunk and came up with a crock of Graves' Pure Grain Alcohol. He poured a draught into a tin dipper and drank it neat. Then, barefoot and in his underwear, he strolled down to the brook through the deep snow, cut the ice in the pond, and brought a pail of water back to the shack. He remarked that it was middling coolish. While pulling on his pants and showpacks he worked on half a cut of B. & L., squirting the juice on to the sizzling stove—to kill the germs in the air, he always said. In a few minutes he took another shot of the grog. Then, just before the gut-hammer's *clong clong* broke through the cold silent darkness outside, he pawed again under the bunk and this time brought forth a bottle of milk of magnesia.

"I guess I better take a dose of this," he said. "You know, I got to be powerful careful of my stomach. . . . It ain't very strong."

JIGGER JONES would have lived to be a hundred years old, probably much older, had he been allowed to remain deep in the logging woods where he belonged. Whole trees had crashed upon him; he had fallen forty-five feet off a dam at First Connecticut Lake; a team of logs had run him down; large men had jumped on his chest with calked boots; and for more than half a century he had lived in snow all winter, in icy water all spring, on the drive—but neither exposure nor accident seemed to have the least effect on him. It was only when circumstances forced him out of the logging camps, and into the ways of civilisation, that he took the first step toward the grave.

When the New England pulpwood industry went bad in the 1920's, the ageing Jigger found camp foremen's jobs scarce, and he went to work for the United States Forest Service. They put him atop Mount Chocorua, in New Hampshire, as a fire lookout, and later moved him to the summit of Carter Dome, highest fire tower in north-eastern United States. Jigger could spot fires. He made a dandy lookout—alert, competent, and conscientious—just as long as there was actual fire hazard in the woods. But when rains had soaked the forest and even a city slicker would have known there could be no forest fires, Jigger took to seeing bats, winged eels, and other phenomena familiar to able drinking men, even in high altitudes. Much as the Forest Service liked the Jigger, they had to let him go.

Presently, and after a brief toot in town, Jigger became a sort of watchdog for a bloated capitalist who had a summer house and large shooting preserve in northern New England. During the dangerous dry months it was again Jigger's duty to sit in a lookout shack, this time atop a bald peak whose sides were so sheer as to discourage most mountain-climbers. How, in the name of God, he ever managed to tote material to the very top of this dome and there set up a small but practical still must be left to the imagination. But he did exactly that, and for weeks, until it blew up in a blaze of glory and fired the lookout cabin itself, the only smoke visible for miles around was that from what Jigger was pleased to call Jones's Tin-plated, Triple-Worm, Little Giant Still. The product of this still, which Jigger boasted was the highest in all America, was said to have made men breathe easily at four thousand feet altitude. Jigger called it Eagle Sweat.

FOLLOWING detection of this contrivance and his subsequent discharge from the capitalist's *ménage*, Jigger took a job as foreman at a CCC camp. This was undoubtedly the beginning of the end. He took to riding about, on occasion, in an automobile, and there was also the effect that life in a CCC camp must have had on his *morale*. City guys had ever been anathema to Jigger, and in his eyes all CCC boys were such; yet he set out manfully to make real woodsmen of them. But he couldn't fire anybody, as of yore. He couldn't even curse anybody, much less whale some sense into them with a peavey handle. And "professors" came to camp to lecture the boys about the evils of gonococci, which Jigger held could be laid low and harmless by immediate applications of strong tobacco juice, as witness his own excellent health and pure reproductive ability at close to seventy years.

And there were rules about shaving and bathing and clothing and the hell and all. Not that Jigger paid any attention to any such rules, but it bothered him to know they existed, even in theory. Perhaps the study periods bothered him most, although he never attended them. What did it profit a man, he would ask, to know that a fir was an *Abies balsamea*, if he didn't know on which side of a tree the moss grew? "And a skunk ain't no bottle of Floridy water, even if you calls him by one of them fancy Polark names," he said. (By "Polark," i.e. *Polish*, Jigger designated any foreign language, either dead or living.)

It was all pretty discouraging to one who had spit Spearhead into the eyes of mean French Canadians and had bitten ears off gigantic Blue Nosers from New Brunswick. Although the CCC boys, and their officers, too, learned to like The Jigger immensely and to have deep respect for his lore of the woods, Jigger's mind often turned back to the great days when, as boss of a hundred wild riverhogs, he had chased the logs from headwaters at Connecticut Lake down to Holyoke, Massachusetts, and on at least two occasions, when the log booms had broken, right down to salt water at Saybrook, on Long Island Sound.

When this melancholia fastened upon him, Jigger would, in spite of all the CCC officers could do, get off the reservation and go to town, any town, where he could "get something for" his stomach, an organ that must have been made of nothing less than boiler plate.

It was then that the pseudo-sophisticated

younger generation of the White Mountain area were struck dumb and startled before the Vastness of a he-man's binge. When he rolled out the strophes to "The Redlight Saloon," the Great Stone Face in Franconia Notch was seen to tremble slightly, it was reported, and the few moose left in New Hampshire charged, bellowing in fear, over the state line into Maine.

It was a sort of swan song, one of Jigger's last great efforts to howl down the civilisation that was catching up, hemming him in. Men who heard The Jigger on these latter benders said his cry was like that of a trapped animal —fierce, wild, and defiant, yet with a ring of fear at the bottom. So, when the CCC regretfully let Jigger go, the end was not far off; but the end was not as it should have been. Folk had long said of Jigger that he would surely go to his death by being trampled under the claws of purple pachyderms, while a six-legged boa-constrictor caressed his neck —fauna he had often met with in his years of serious drinking. Others had predicted, for years on end, that he would finally tumble off some mountain cliff high enough to bust him up proper. None could have guessed that death would call for The Jigger in a conveyance he wholeheartedly loathed—an automobile.

Released by the CCC, Jigger had taken to trapping, an art he had practised off and on since boyhood. He did very well with wildcat and lynx, that last winter of his life, bringing several of the clawing devils alive into town. He could get more for them alive from zoos than their fur would bring. Then came that cold day in February of 1935.

Starting out over his line, Jigger found a lynx in the first trap. He killed it. And then a mighty thirst struck him. Instead of continuing on over the trap line, as he knew he should have done, he hurried back to the village where he could claim the lynx bounty. Immediately he got the money he bought a quart of drinking liquor, then another, treating everybody in town who would drink.

After two days of this Jigger suddenly awoke to the fact that he had not visited his traps in forty-eight hours, a gross violation of a law that had been getting considerable attention from game-wardens. This wouldn't do, for Jigger had often felt the heavy hands of the wardens in times past.

So, in what he must have known to be a weak moment, he engaged a driver and what he contemptuously referred to as a "horseless carriage" to carry him to a point where he could take off on snowshoes near his trap line. Hitting along on all four, the car slithered off the icy road and crashed into a telephone pole.

The country doc to whom they brought the dying Jigger could hardly believe that a mere automobile accident could lay low such an indestructible fellow as he had known The Jigger to be. True enough, his skull was broken in two places: he had concussion; and his arms, legs, shoulders, and ribs were smashed. Still, in the past, Jigger had taken such things in his stride.

But it wasn't a mere accident. It was something much larger than that. It was the last round in a one-sided battle between all civilisation and one unadulterated savage of the species lumberjack. And it was a churlish fate that removed him in such manner, even though he had his boots on, the old timber beast who could run faster, spit farther, jump higher, and belch louder than any ory-eyed so-and-so north of Boston. All the old-time loggers at the funeral, during which Jigger wore socks, remarked that it was one hell of a way for The Jigger to get sluiced.

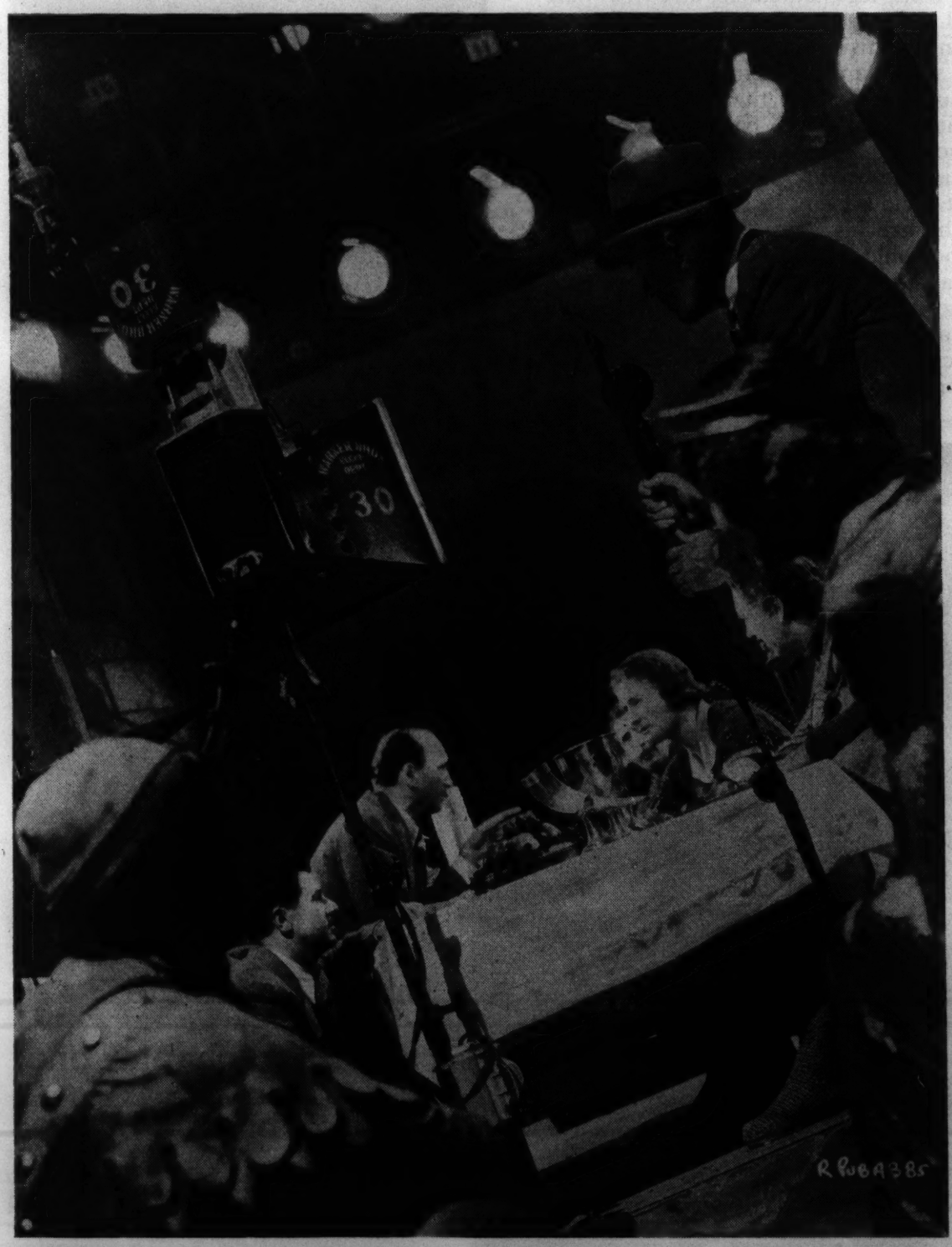
Valley of the Giants (*Warners*)

(*Courtesy High Commissioner for Canada*)

'Holy Old Mackinaw'—a Natural History of the American Lumberjack, published by the MacMillan Company of New York.
This extract is the celebrated chapter one and is published by kind permission of the MacMillan Company.

THE DIRECTORIAL TOUCH

Some of Hollywood's ace directors—those who shout and those who don't—described by EZRA GOODMAN



Michael Curtiz directing Errol Flynn in "The Adventures of Robin Hood". (First National)

ROUGHLY speaking, there are two types of directors in Hollywood—those who raise their voices, and those who don't. Many of them do, for various reasons. They may be profoundly displeased with either the cameraman, the grips, juicers, script, acting, the unnecessary noise on the set, the stupid extras, the shooting schedule, the stand-ins, the studio policy or the general Hollywood set-up. Or they may be pleased with everything and merely let off steam as a matter of course.

Those who don't raise their voices are either so competent and efficient that they can afford to indicate their point of view in little more than a whisper. Or, perhaps, they are waiting for their option to be picked up by the front office and are, therefore, no longer in a position to assume the world.

Let us take a fan magazine tour of the various studios with an eye peeled not for Myrna Loy or Ginger Rogers but for the impresarios who put them through their paces. This may be a little tough on those who are on the lookout for the Misses Loy and Rogers, but it should be a great deal more educational.

At this point, it is just as well to scotch, once and for all, the rumour that Hollywood directors go about attired like forest rangers in boots, breeches and horsehair shirts. On the contrary, they usually wear sandals of Mexican derivation, fancy slacks styled in the Broadway fashion, loud polo shirts, wrist watches to note periodically the unprecedented passage of time during which nothing whatsoever has been accomplished, and sometimes either caps or sunglasses to protect their eyes from the klieg lights and the actions of the Thespians beneath.

It is also well to add here, before we approach the gist of our discussion, that the directorial vocabulary is confined to a few choice expressions. Most of these are so choice that it is impossible to reprint them here. The others include such favourites as "QUIET!", "ACTION!", "Fine, boys, fine—but let's do that scene just once more", "Cut!", "Beautiful, darling, beautiful", "That smells bad", and "Print that one".

One of the most colourful of Hollywood directors is the talented and straightforward Archie Mayo, creator of such films as *Black Legion*, *The Petrified Forest* and *It's Love I'm After*. At the moment, Mayo is directing a comedy, starring Andrea Leeds, at Universal. He goes into long psychological discussions with Miss Leeds in order to lay bare the motivation of each of her actions and lines, and acts out the dialogue himself. Thickset, with a bellowing voice and an ability to swear like a fireman, Mayo dominates the entire company. He even tells Rudolph Mate, one of the world's finest cameramen, how to handle his instrument, and refers to him as "you painter with lights." He calls everybody on the set "Honey", "Sweetheart", or "Darling". Mayo puts on a good show, but his basic purpose is to put everyone at ease and get good results.

A BIRD of another feather is George Cukor, director of *Camille* and *David Copperfield*, who is now doing *Zaza* with Claudette Colbert at Paramount. Mild-mannered and

wearing glasses, Cukor looks more like a college professor than a motion-picture director. He prefaces his order with "Please", "Ladies and Gentlemen", "Thank You" and other expressions rarely heard in Hollywood. Periodically, he turns to Nazimova who has been hired as technical advisor for the production, in order to get her point of view. All this, however, is also a pose. Cukor has a firm grip on the proceedings and knows precisely what he wants. Everyone on the set is currently occupied in shooting a short scene in which Claudette Colbert exchanges a few lines of dialogue with Bert Lahr and Helen Westley. One "take" follows another. Once Miss Colbert miffs her line, then Lahr, then the camera goes wrong, and finally an airplane flies over the sound stage. As soon as a "take" is completed, no matter how poor it has been, Cukor enthusiastically says "Excellent—print that one—now let's shoot just one more." The scene has to be done eleven times before Cukor is satisfied.

At Twentieth Century-Fox, Gregory Ratoff, who has a three-way contract with the studio as actor, writer and director, is doing an oriental melodrama starring Alice Faye and Warner Baxter. Ratoff, who has a Russian accent that can be sliced with a kitchen knife, is the volatile type. He hops about, gesticulates violently, spouts phrases and gets all excited. The picture has been in production a few weeks and many of the Chinese extras on the set are already talking with a Russian accent. After a great deal of rehearsal and aggravation, they are finally shooting a scene, but one of the Chinese extras, Wang by name, misses his cue. "You s— of a b—!", shouts Ratoff, and at the same time rushes over to the little Oriental, who is petrified with fear, kisses him violently on the cheek and exclaims: "You know, Wang, I wouldn't insult you for the world, you know that, don't you?" It takes a few minutes for the spectators to calm down after this.

William Keighley, directing *Brother Rat*, with Wayne Morris, at Warners, is one of Hollywood's slickest directors. He works quickly, efficiently and handles everyone with kid gloves. Keighley, looking for all the world like a visiting diplomat, never raises his voice, even when it seems that everything is going wrong, and the entire company seems to be enjoying making the picture. Nevertheless, despite the carefree mood prevailing, there is exactly the same attention to detail as on the Cukor or Mayo sets. There are sometimes as many as ten "takes" to a scene, but everything is accomplished with the most gracious and polite manner.

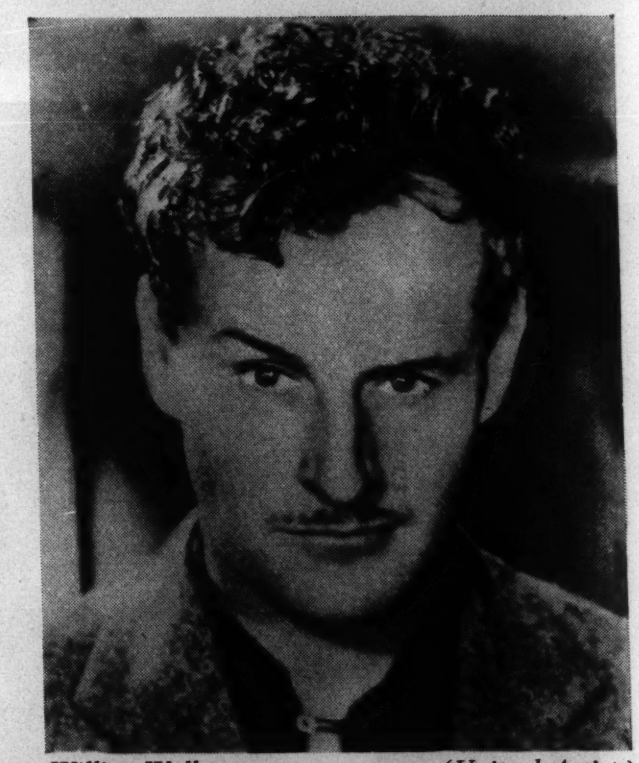
AMONG the Hollywood firecrackers list William (Wild Bill) Wellman, who is doing *Men With Wings*, an aviation saga at Paramount. Wellman, who can outcuss anyone on the lot, is a mass of energy. Tall, tousle-haired and almost brutally frank, nothing is sacred to him. On the spur of the moment, he grabs the script girl and kisses her. Wellman is having the time of his life on this picture since his primary interests are Technicolor and aviation (he is a former war pilot and directed *Wings* ten years ago). *Men With Wings* combines both of his interests. Wellman's pictures move at a rip-roaring tempo and he always keeps the action humming. It was he who had James Cagney dunk Mae Clarke's nose in a grapefruit in *The Public Enemy* and Fredric March knock out Carole Lombard in *Nothing Sacred*.

A typical Wellman fable, apocryphal perhaps, is told by Robert Carson, his scenarist who worked with him on *A Star is Born* and other pictures. It seems that a fire broke out one day in the studio just around the corner from Wellman's office and the fire force turned out in full regalia for the event. As the engines drove into the lot past his office, Wellman leaned out of the window and screamed frantically: "Help! Fire! Help!" at the very same time that various frenzied studio employees were attempting to direct the firefighters to the proper destination. The firemen finally got to the flames, but not until Wellman had had his bit of fun.

At Warners, Anatole Litvak, recently imported from France where he did *Mayerling*, is handling the production of *The Sisters*, with Bette Davis and Errol Flynn. Litvak is one of the most fastidious directors in Hollywood where attention to detail is the rule rather than the exception. The scene being photographed will last only a few seconds on the screen and show some soldiers rushing up two flights of stairs. The set itself has been in construction for two days, while the camera set-up has taken from morning till late afternoon to complete. A truck with a long crane has been backed into the sound stage and the camera and the operative cameraman are perched at the end of the boom somewhere near the roof of the stage. Litvak and Tony Gaudio, the chief cameraman, are standing on a tall platform observing the action. The scene is rehearsed time and again, the soldiers running up the stairs and the camera crane following them. Litvak, bushy-haired and speaking with a marked accent, makes many fine corrections in the action. It takes two full hours before this slight scene is recorded by the camera.

At the same studio is Michael Curtiz, of Hungary, who is currently supervising one of the year's most promising films, *Angels with Dirty Faces*, starring James Cagney, Pat O'Brien and the "Dead End" Kids. Curtiz is a consistently successful director, specializing in the action genre. He has done such films as *Captain Blood*, *Kid Galahad* and *Robin Hood*. The studio publicity department has been building up Curtiz as competition for Samuel Goldwyn and attributing all kinds of spurious Malapropisms to him. Curtiz, however, is a serious worker. He understands how to approach a scene both for camera and dialogue. The "Dead End" Kids, who are practical jokesters, keep getting in Curtiz's hair, and he is forced to take a poke at them every once in a while. Curtiz is one of the few directors in Hollywood whom the "Dead End" Kids respect, since he is more than six feet tall, was a former strong man in a circus, and has a powerful build. He directs his pictures without fanfare, speaking with a strong accent, and giving the unmistakable impression, as do most of Hollywood's directors, of knowing what he wants and exactly how he wants to get it.

George Cukor (*M.G.M.*)



William Wellman (*United Artists*)

Archie Mayo (*seated left*) (*Warners*)

OIL Beneath the BOUGH

Top: At work in a Textile Factory. Centre: A Domestic Science Class. Bottom: An Iranian Industrial Worker.

The story behind John Taylor's Film 'The Dawn of Iran' told for SEE by Alexander Shaw

A book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness
O, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Somehow I don't think that Omar Khayyam would have approved of the excellent film *Dawn of Iran*. For it shows a Persia from which the roses and the hyacinths and the wine have vanished; a country where only the Loaf of Bread remains and Omar's hedonistic eye would not have recognised the dreams and hopes with which that loaf of bread is leavened.

It must have been difficult to make such an honest film about a country of which the very name conjures up a host of romantic, ready-made ideas. Persia—where jewelled warriors rode horses which were swifter than the fleet gazelles, where soft-voiced houris gathered round the gently splashing fountains, where bright birds flashed among the heavy perfumed flowers. Were these things fact or fiction, history or the details of some Persian miniature?

Dawn of Iran shows a Persia stripped of all this fabled colour. Of Omar Khayyam's poem only the story of how "Sultan after Sultan, with his pomp, abides his destined hour" remains.

The film opens with a ceremony. His Imperial Majesty Shah Reza Pahlavi is to open the Northern section of Iran's first railway. The crows are gathered; the Royal Family are on the platform; the engine steams magnificently into the station. All is efficiency and everything is of the most modern. But, as if in final salute to the past, the ceremony includes one echo of the old pomp—the last bolt screwed in the railway line by the Royal hand, is made of gold.

Having firmly established the fact that this is a film of the new Iran and not of outmoded Persia, the camera takes us back into history with a sequence which is most satisfactory and

Persia of the Romantics has become Iran, where the Shepherds become factory hands, the women learn to cook scientifically, and the children learn the methods of the western world.

successful. Camera, commentary and music have combined to tell, in very few feet, the tale of triumph and disaster that is the story of Persia. The camera sweeps across a barren countryside on to the ruins of Persepolis and, as it closes in to show details of carvings and low-reliefs on tumbled temples and on battered walls, the deep voice of Darius, the Archaeminian, booms out:—

I am Darius, the great King, the King of Kings, King of lands peopled by all races.

The effect of the voice and of the beautifully shot details of pillar and low relief is strangely moving and disconcerting. It is as though history itself were speaking; the blood just dry on the marble, the sword just sheathed in the silver scabbard.

The studios, with their thousand actors and million-dollar sets, never made history as vivid as does this sequence.

And now the strange story of the Iran of to-day starts.

SEVENTEEN years ago. The great Empire had been broken up, the mighty cities were in ruins. Persia had become a land of poverty and oppression. Her people were scattered and without a leader. For them the past had ceased to be glorious and the future was without hope. Leaderless, they roamed the countryside in nomadic bands, tending their flocks in burning desert or on frozen plain, scattered remnants of a once great people.

But there was magic in the soil of Persia: a thick, black substance oozed from the sides of the hills in the South. Strange ragged figures with flaming torches scoop the substance from the surface of the puddles. A European fires a flare from the side of a hill and a pillar of flame, as if at some magician's command, bursts from the valley, signalling the discovery of oil.

The universal adoption of the internal combustion engine was to enable Persia to build up a new glory. The people of the West needed fuel for their machines and Persia had that fuel in vast quantities.

The discovery of oil and the appearance on the scene of Rheza Khan made Iran possible. The former brought wealth to the country and Rheza Khan knew how to control that wealth for his people's good.

Omar Khayyam would have found it difficult to have continued his musings on the pleasant futility of human effort with the clatter of modern Iran in his ears. The Rumble of the Distant Drum has become a very noisy actuality. The East's Swift Hunter would to-day be more likely to noose an electric pylon than a Sultan's turret; the Scattered Petals of the Tasselled Rose would fall into the cement mixer.

Hands, used only to the plough, have quickly accustomed themselves to the rivetter; legs, used to walking the plains, have learned to grip the soaring girders. Concrete and steel replace marble and mosaic. There are factories and post offices to be built; railways to open up the country; bridges and roads to cross the mountains.

Here the film inevitably takes on the appearance of a Soviet epic. Roads are built in a couple of shots—deserts reclaimed in a sequence; crops improved with a cut; and agriculture mechanized in a dissolve. Progress appears almost too easy. The film Iran is built in less than a day.

Towering behind this renaissance are the shining and fantastic shapes of the oil wells; pumping their liquid power through mile after mile of pipe line to the refineries at Abadan. Bringing back from the West money for the Treasury, money to educate a nation and build a new country.

"My children, I advise you to show your attachment to your country by industry and work". The words of Reza Pahlavi are carried across the serious and intent faces of young Iran at work in field and factory.

"You, my sisters and daughters, to-day have become members of society". The emancipated women of Iran are told that it is their duty to train sound and strong citizens.

And back among the people of Iran the film again becomes real and moving. The boys in the classroom, the girls at play and the voice of their leader advising and encouraging them. With sympathy and understanding, the camera records their activities; shows on their faces their hopes and fears.

Wisely the film leaves the future alone, although the march past of the mechanised army suggests disquieting possibilities. We have seen this grim display too often on the newsreels to find in it only the outward expression of a new nation's natural pride. The tanks and aeroplanes cast dark shadows of the future before them. For the oil which made Iran possible was a double-headed gift. The civilised world is dependent on oil and Abadan is to-day as politically important as Gibraltar, the Suez Canal or Singapore.

But the spectator may possibly be able to comfort himself if he turns again to Omar Khayyam.

Ah, my beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and Future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, to-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

Dawn of Iran is a memorable film. John Taylor has done brilliant work with the camera, and if we shall soon forget the steel and concrete Iran of the present, we shall remember for a long time his re-creation of the splendours of the past and the promise for the future of their country, which is implicit in the quiet, determined faces of the young Iranians of to-day.

"Sheer adrenal intelligence and pugnaciousness."

IN THE GLAND MANNER

We don't want to make trouble for anyone, but we think every Hollywood producer should know about this ultra-scientific method of choosing actors and actresses explained by Mary Elwyn.

RUSSELL FERGUSON says typing is an old story. He's right—Claud Bernard started it all sixty years ago. Of course, he had never seen big film executives glowering behind fat cigars, pouring adrenalin into their blood-stream in a way that is simply terrific —and he'd never seen Stymie Beard, Tom Mix's Tony or Shirley Temple, if it comes to that. Well, perhaps typing is an old story, but maybe it would be better if it was a lot older and Claud Bernard had given it a start along the glandular way before Sam Goldwyn ever heard of celluloid.

Assuming that you don't know a thing about ductless glands here's just enough to help you become an amateur endocrinologist and a casting director in your own right.

Romance? What do you expect of an age when love lies dreaming at the bottom of a test tube?

This glandular cocktail we all possess determines not only our physical type but our mental and emotional one. There are roughly eight of them in our bodies. As their name implies they send their secretions directly into the blood in the form of hormones which vary in quantity according to the body's needs.

Come down the throat to the thyroid. Just a fraction of this secretion marks the balance between the idiot and the normal being. Look at those grand, highly-coloured advertisements in *Esquire* of girls drawn by any male and they'll probably be the hyperthyroid type. All those who are "Pawed by a Pudgy Wudgy" show flambuoyant hyperthyroidism. Mae West is the outstanding creator of this type on the screen. They have beautiful bodies, brilliant eyes, and are flatteringly susceptible to males.

Given a slight thyroid balance women become sex-charmers *par excellence*. First in this category is Bette Davis, a thyroid type if there ever was one, and the most intelligent and diverse actress of the screen. After her their names are legion: Carole Lombard, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Miriam Hopkins, Joan Blondell, Alice Faye—and once in a verree refined way, Sweetheart Pickford.

Male thyroidites cover many a screen with their brilliantined waves, the Nelson Eddys, Gene Raymonds, Dick Powells. Is it possible that in the case of Bing Crosby a toupee covers the spot where once waved fair hair that would put him among the thyroid boys? He has the charm, ease and eyes that point that way.

Dark women have, as a rule, an adrenal compensation. Stalin and Mussolini have thyroid eyes coupled with the kinky hair of the adrenal type.

The pituitary is formed of two lobes an inch or more from the back of the nose, and was called by the seventeenth-century anatomists "the little brain". After some practice you'll probably be able to recognise this type from among the hirsute or bladder-of-lard faces of your friends. As a rule the pituitarist has evenly-spaced teeth, wide-apart eyes, thick eyebrows and hairy legs. George Robey bears out the eye-brow theory and he probably hides a satyr's leg beneath his suitings.

It is very romantic to read how Norsemen became berserk, fought like giants and did not bleed in battle. But it was a nasty business and not the saga it sounds. Actually they suffered from abnormal pituitary development brought on by a diet of salt fish and total lack of vitamins during the long, dark Northern winters. They developed a disease called acromegaly, ending in homicidal mania, grew hairy, wolfish muzzles and were dreaded as werewolves.

Sideshows are full of abnormal pituitary development. Giants, dwarfs, fat women are

"A slight thyroid balance makes women sex-charmers par excellence."

all its victims and are fortunately proud of their abnormalities.

Grant Allen said an Englishman's idea of God was an Englishman twelve feet high—pituitary might produce such a god but he'd be very dull—twice as tall and twice as dull —Grant Allen forbid!

Little is known of the parathyroids, neighbours of the thyroids, except that they control the supply of lime to the body.

Ancients called the pineal, situated at the back of the skull, "the seat of the soul". Christ and Paul were pure pineal. So too was Joan of Arc with her illusions, her childish boasting, her splendid bravery:

"I said 'go ye boldly against the English—' and I went myself." Remember Leslie Howard in *Petrified Forest* and in *Berkeley Square*?

Down the map a little the thymus gland is found in the chest. It normally ceases functioning about adolescence. Peter Pan is the supreme type of continued thymus functioning—only in real life he would probably have been a criminal of the worst type. Prisons are filled with thymo-centrics with fine hair, baby faces and records for brutality. A child with an abnormal thymus has a strong thread of mental and physical cruelty, a part played perfectly by Bonita Granville in *These Three*.

Even directors can type Billie Burke correctly, with her childlike face and her ability to act the woman whose thymus has become active in middle life, disturbing the proper functioning of the thyroid, dispensing a terrible, fluttering energy and sugar-coating her selfishness.

The romantic glands are not near the heart as one might suppose, but above the kidneys. They are called the suprarenals and give out adrenalin. These people usually have kinky hair, are ambitious and quick tempered. These are the fighting glands of the male and are sensitive to emotion. Adrenalin runs in the blood stream of warriors.

WHAT is it that makes the athlete? Co-ordination of muscle, speed and timing, and the adrenal-centred have it. When Perry plays tennis he is a gunman with a racket in his hand, savage, explosive, relentless. Watch Tarzan Glenn Morris, swordsman Flynn or swimmer Weissmuller, and you'll see what it is.

That Hemingway of the screen, Spencer Tracy, takes adrenal honours; he is intelligent, tender, savage and *ordinary* in a way no other actor can equal. In his wake follow Muni, Gable, Cagney, Robinson and Arnold, and, with a dash of thyroidal charm, William Powell and Melvyn Douglas.

Of the women Claudette Colbert leads for natural beauty and grace: she seems to have everything, but most women of this type have imperfections to conquer and do so through sheer adrenal intelligence and pugnaciousness. In this class is Shearer, an adrenal Antoinette against the thyroidal one of history. Barbara Stanwyck is another, and Flora Robson, and that loveliest, most charming woman who has everything except good ankles, Myrna Loy.

There are others too, ambitious, beautiful or both, of great courage and brilliance who have "ate the bread of gods," Rosita Forbes, Greer Garson, and in the recent past, Amelia Erhardt. They are the most interesting types in the world, the creators of history and the remembered in art.

With perfect glandular compensation you get a superbly balanced loveliness in women, but not the interest, excitement, and "edge" of women not so evenly balanced. Madeleine Carroll is probably one of the loveliest women —but can she enthral you as Bette Davis can: Bette who is so much less beautiful?

There are exceptions. Garbo appears to have glandular balance. She has an enchantment without parallel, an adult strength and tenderness, a meticulous precision of art that shines through the tragic veil that is always about human perfection and is the real meaning of the misused word "glamour".

This balance seems to have no effect upon charm in men. Robert Donat springs to mind as the perfect type, a man who has charm and a delicate wit that is beyond most. At a guess Bernard Shaw has perfect endocrine balance. His staying powers may be due to vegetarianism, woollen underwear or well-balanced glands: my bet is on the glands. Both his literary and his newsreel antics are performed so very much in the gland manner.

It was probably only Charles Laughton's printed word when he likened his face to an elephant's behind that prevented his being cast as Monsieur Beaucaire—although he'd make a pretty good job of it if he were.

You couldn't find a more horrible piece of miscasting than putting the adrenalin-type Irene Dunne to exercising the joy of living, in the thyroidal parts she has been gurgling through recently. Nor is it possible to look back without a shudder to the time when sensitive, pineal-type Leslie Howard bounced through the horrors of *Stand In*.

Boris Karloff, whose *macabre* line must always suggest at least a screen-shrivelled pituitary, put Cambridge cadences into the mouth of a thymo-centric gangster in that otherwise fine film *Scarface*.

Probably Lionel, that homespun, wise and everlasting Barrymore, and that "high falutin lovin' man" Rasputin, had not one honest-to-god gland in common.

Director's dreams may be pretty things, but a little study of who is glandularly who, and capable of taking a chosen part would be a help to an audience, which, after all, has some rights. Types chosen for the big historical epics seem to prove it will be a long time before directors will out-cast the Almighty.

Stymie Beard? Who knows, that little mulberry face keeps its secret. Maybe some day—another epic.

"Hannibal . . . Hannibal
Bangin' through the Alps,
Licked the proud Romans
Ran home with their scalps—"

Spanky McFarland, Rin Tin Tin, tigers and Tommy Kelly? Of course they're stars—they don't give a darn if their right gland knows what their left gland is doing *now*—but in ten years—leaving out the tigers and Rin Tin—when their glands have done their worst, will you pick them then, or will they in their turn be saying "hey you" to thyroidal hot-dog sellers and pituitary window-cleaners?

GREAT HEIL TO HEALTH

(*Olympische Spiele*)

WHEN a film has been almost two years in the cutting-room it should at least arouse curiosity. But when, in addition, it is the best sports picture that has ever been made, and an airy statement of the Nazi religion, it becomes even important. This film, *Olympia*, is Leni Riefenstahl's Version of the 1936 Olympic Games held in Berlin. It is a very self-conscious film and a very long one, the two parts together lasting almost four hours. No one, I suppose, but the hardiest Teutons would see both parts on the same evening.

Probably the most remarkable thing about the film is that it is never tiresome over this long period of time. The shooting and the cutting have been beautifully done. Ordinary events such as the hammer-throw are actually made exciting. The agony of the cross-country runners is caught with painful realism. The amount of suspense that is drawn out of such a thing as military riding is truly remarkable. You can be sure of one thing in connection with this picture; you won't be bored by it.

If it were necessary to select parts of the film which stand out from the others I should be inclined to select, for photographic excellence, the diving and the pole-vaulting which have been done almost entirely in slow-motion. The pole-vaulting is taken at sunset when there is no sun but just a lot of grey and black clouds behind the cross-bars. The familiar almosts and overs seem much more important in this setting. And when white pants go into a black cloud in slow-motion you ought to be impressed.

The diving of course is a natural. The newsreel boys discovered that long ago. The attractiveness of this sequence depends as much on the angles as on the slow-motion. At this point the film goes in for a little trick stuff, with stop and reverse motion. These intrusions are somewhat annoying but they don't really spoil the sequence. Those who made the film must have shot every conceiv-

Prize winner at the Venice Festival, Leni Riefenstahl's film of the 1936 Olympic Games has yet to be shown in this country. Nods and winks to the effect that the prize was awarded on political grounds are not borne out by reviewers who accord hearty praise to the film.

In a special criticism of the film written for SEE an American critic expresses some unease at the fanatical nature of Nazi sport worship, and wonders if we shall yet see the day when the defeat of a German football team will precipitate an international crisis.

★ ★ ★

able angle on the divers, except one they might possibly have got by letting one of the cameramen ride a diver. One camera gets the divers bouncing in the air and another, under water, gets them when they hit the surface. The diving is used for the finale of events and a forceful one it makes.

Since the Germans have never established any great reputations as being willing occupants of back seats, it is rather surprising that no attempt is made in the film to minimise the victories of other countries and to maximise those of Germany. But, after all, it is rather difficult to minimise Jesse Owens. Since it was quite impossible to present Germany as the most successful of the nations participating in the games, an alternative had to be chosen. It was the next best thing to Germany—muscles.

From the propaganda point of view, which is one of the most important to be considered in connection with this picture, muscles were only a short distance behind Germany in desirability as a victor. The value of this film as propaganda lies not in the effect it will have on the world outside Germany, but its importance lies in the effect it will have on the German people. This of course is true of practically all their propaganda. (If they are really spending money trying to sell themselves to the rest of the world they are surely getting gypped and ought to change their advertising agency.)

THE message which this film has for the German people is that old one of body-love. It builds up a four-hour shining picture of thousands of young men and women bursting with health and strength and it keeps asking the little man in the tenth row; "Wouldn't you like to be doing these things, and why aren't you doing these things?" The picture shows the acclaim which is showered upon those of high physical achievement. It tries to furnish the hardy Germans with an incentive for making themselves hardier.

It is a pity that no statistics are available to show the increase in chest expansion among the German population since the release of this picture, but it must be considerable. Using films like this seems to be almost the ideal way of conditioning your population for carrying bigger guns. It is certainly much more effective than supplying them all with white sweaters.

It would probably be easier to excuse the Nazis if they saw in this picture only an opportunity to make their people better soldiers. But when they close the film with hosannas to the new religion of the muscle, it seems just too difficult to accept. There is an inkling of this in the very pretentious beginning of the film when the camera wanders through the cold, tumbled temples of the Greek deities. Youth and muscle finally arise from these ruins having heard the cry from the Berlin Olympic Games of 1936. The long-extinguished torch is re-lighted and carried by runners from Greece to Germany.

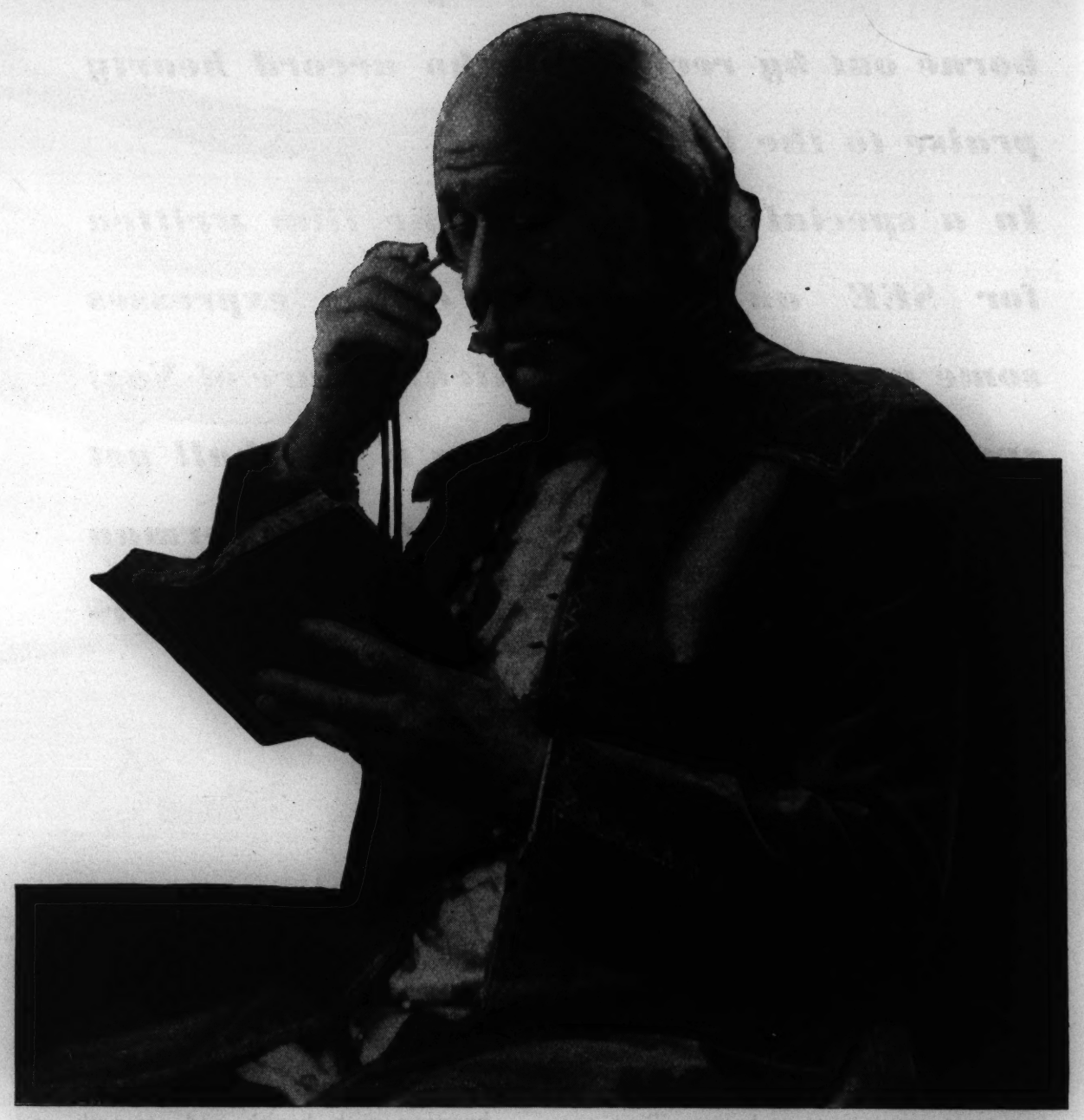
Right from this beginning the film takes itself very seriously. The expressions on the athletes' faces alternate between glumness and grimness. Almost the only one the camera allows to smile is the Fuhrer who appears from time to time beaming benevolently on the contestants, except the black boys.

The pay-off of the film is when, with majestic vagueness, shafts of light rise from the battleground of the Olympic stadium into the heavens, meeting there in a blaze of light to the accompaniment of a seraphic choir and a celestial symphony of at least three hundred pieces. It is difficult to tell whether one is just supposed to be bewildered by this or merely to decide that he is witnessing what someone thought was a "fitting conclusion" for this Nazi religious spectacle.

Whichever the case, it is somewhat disturbing to see people getting metaphysical about a relay race, and it is interesting to speculate as to what will result from this muscular pantheism. If it gives us another sports film as good as *Olympia*, fine; but if each loss by a German football team precipitates an international crisis, things don't look so good.

Stills from "Olympische Spiele."

BRUCE at BOMBCUTTA



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Meanwhile the English sailors have gathered round Plymouth Hoe to watch the game. The Spaniards are sighted, but Drake insists on playing the full twenty-one ends, though the Armada gets nearer and nearer.

Drake wins the game. As night falls, he rows out to the Spanish flagship and gains admission by means of a trick. He steals the signals for attack out of the safe in Henry Stephenson's cabin. The Spanish fleet is now powerless to move. Fireships are sent among them.

In the morning there is a great battle, and the English win easily. Henry Stephenson dies gallantly.

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Meanwhile, Bruce is lying in a cave on Rathlin Island, watching a spider trying to build a web. Six times the thread breaks, and six times the spider tries again. That's funny, says Gary, I have been betrayed in six battles. I wonder if the spider will try again? The spider succeeds at the seventh attempt, and Bruce determines to come back to Scotland and try again to beat the English.

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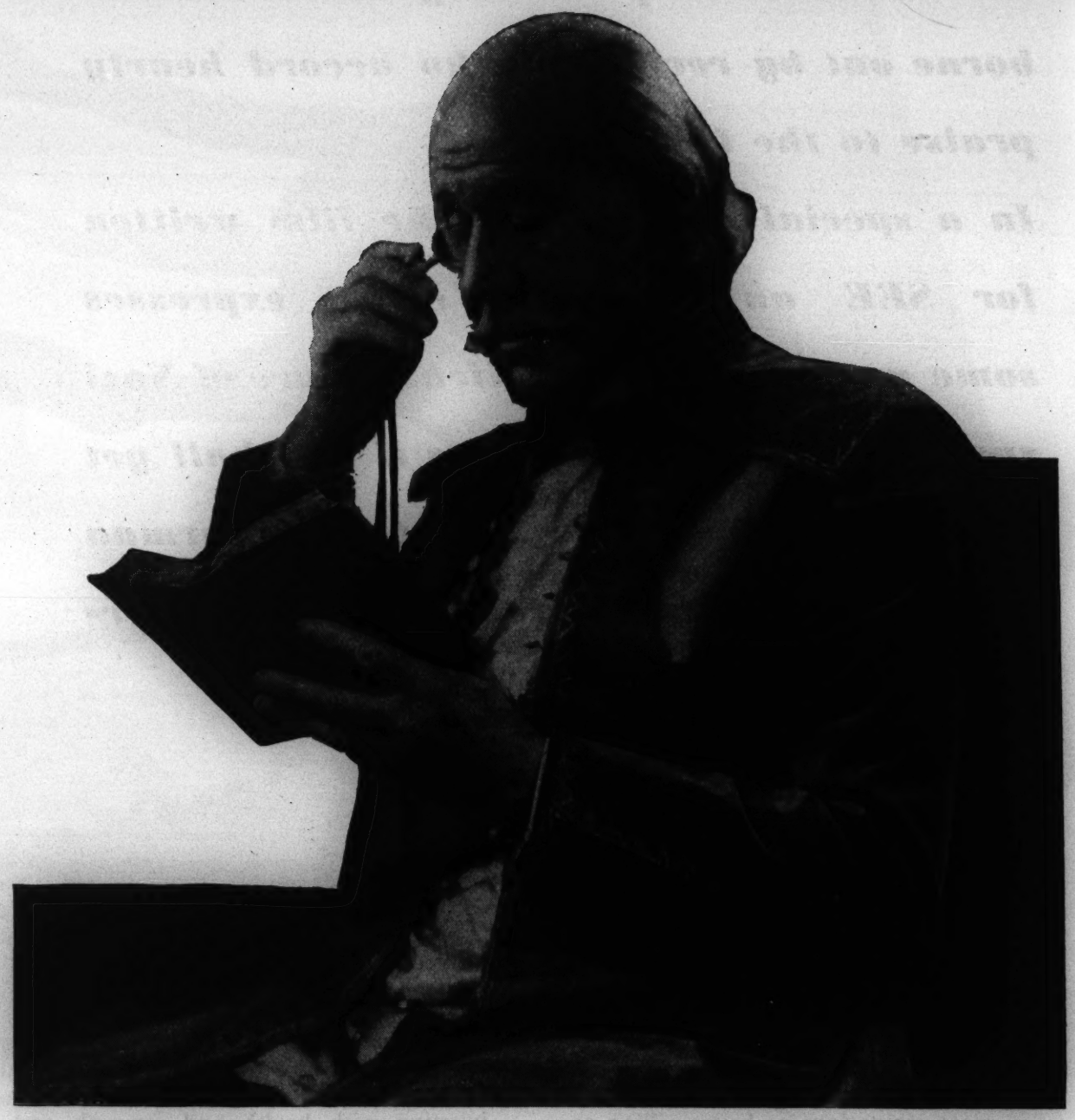

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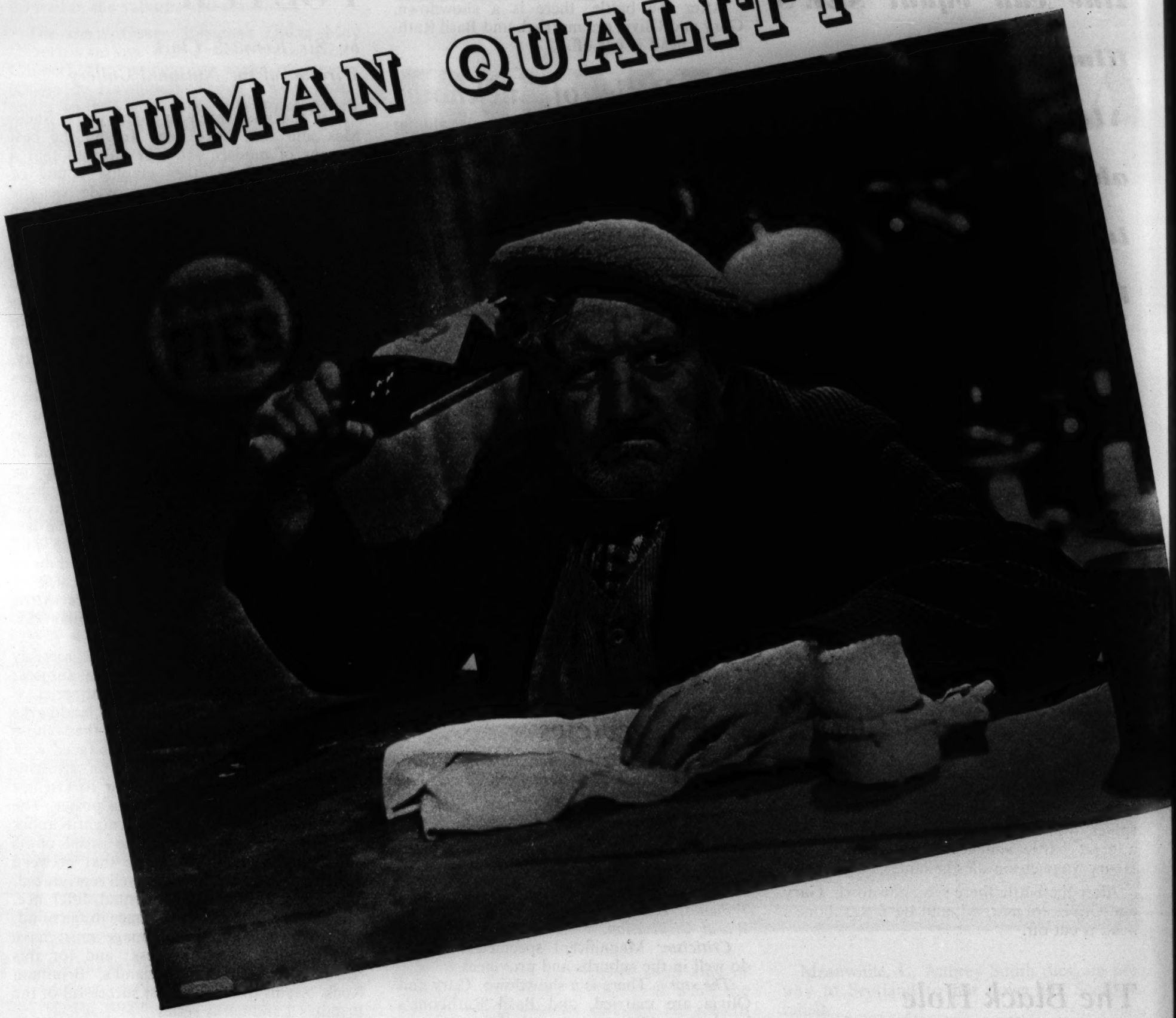
HUMAN QUALITY



THERE are many places in London where a Scots pound is only good for nineteen shillings and sixpence. England waters down even the money. The pure malt is always a native brew, for native consumption; you cannot carry it far at full strength. So it is with profound shock that Americans discover a hitherto unsuspected potency in Scotch whisky when they meet it on its home ground. The further from the still the weaker the brew.

It is the same with Scots Comedians. There is an angelic company who cannot even make the front streets of Glasgow and Edinburgh. They are the home brew, the pure root. They are in the age-old Scots tradition of local satire, incomprehensible two blocks from their cradle. Bring them to London and they flop or must water down to tepid tastelessness; in which case they also flop.

This has been the lot of so many Scots comedians that Will Fyffe sets an exceptional puzzle for the critic. Why has he gone so far? Why has he gone further than any of the others in films? Sitting in his dressing-room adding grey to his hair and lines to his face, he tried to explain.

"I don't remember when I wasn't acting. I was born into a theatrical family for my father ran a penny geggie—not really a penny

★ ★ ★

A talk with Will Fyffe by Thomas Baird

★ ★

one but threepence and sixpence—and I played there in my early teens. Now the penny geggie—you would call it a booth—wasn't a music hall. Drama was the thing. None of your red-nosed, bandy-legged, curly sticked Scots comics. We were actors and we did a different play every night. We travelled about and fitted up for seasons—sometimes the season was one night, sometimes one month and quite often three or four months. We did everything—Shakespeare included. I was Polonius at 15 and later Hamlet. I learned the Welsh Gaelic so that we could do a long season in Wales. Everything was grist to our mill in those days and I played straight drama for twenty years.

"I learned first to be an actor, the music hall came later. They tell me that Chaplin wants to play Napoleon and that Grock wants to play Hamlet, but they cannot because they are clowns. Well, I got all the heavy stuff out of my system when I was a youth. Then I went on the music halls. But not as a Scots comic. I went as an actor and developed the characters such as the Highland Doctor, the Glasgow Drunk and the Scots Engineer. These characters grew straight out of the old straight drama. Cameos, you might call them. I picked the kind of folk I knew and built up the characters bit by bit, a gag now and another one then. They were built inside the theatre and they are theatrical characters, but they are tinged with memories of people I have met and have seen.

"There's another reason why I play such parts. I told you I played Polonius when I was 15. I found that I could make up as an old man and I realised that if I put on whiskers and played old men, I could go on doing them until I was 90. The parts would always be older than me—and if that is not thrift, it's foresight. You see, comedians have to change with the times, but a character actor, playing the kind of parts I do, can go on for generations and can play the parts anywhere. The songs don't date, the fundamental types don't change. There will always be Scots Engineers and Glasgow Drunks in spite of Swing and Coca Cola.

"THE kind of part I have been playing on the films is not really anything new to me. Its just going back a little closer to the beginning and developing the straight part. McNab was more than just a comic character and the shepherd in *Owd Bob* was even a more dramatic part. And the next part I do for the screen will call for more straight acting and less of the music hall technique. I am going to play McAdam in the colour version of *The Blue Lagoon*.

"But don't think I am trying to make a great big difference between the music hall, the cinema and the theatre. For me, at least, they all offer an opportunity to develop the kind of part in which I am interested. In them all my concern is to build up characters and always these are the kind of ordinary people you will find all over the world—real everyday folk with a sense of humour and maybe a bit of sentiment. I am Scots and I play them as Scots, because they are the people I know best. I don't go for a purely realistic treatment. I don't go and watch sailors and engineers and shepherds and sit with a note book getting finnicky details. Music hall, theatre and film are wider than that. It's the human quality that counts—the canniness, the kindliness, the braveries, the humour, the big hopes and the small fears. The lines, the gestures, the pause and the flick of the eye are nothing in themselves, they are just the expression of human qualities that don't change from generation to generation."

And maybe that is why Will Fyffe has seen a bigger world than some of his compatriots. Satire is domestic; wit, based on topicality, is local; but humour and the warmth of life flies further.

ffe in his recent film success "Owd Bob".

BOUND VOLUMES

of

WORLD FILM NEWS

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MOVIE MONUMENT

ALL reference books are said to be indispensable. You have to work on a movie magazine for a while to know just how indispensable *The Motion Picture Almanac* is. The mariner might do without his compass, the B.B.C. without its chamber music, prom. concerts and string quartets, the casting director without his divan and get along a whole sight better than a movie magazine could without the *Almanac*.

For movie magazines are supposed to know more about movies than Einstein doesn't know about space and time. People don't write or ring to ask if Clark Gable is still alive, or how old he is: they are more likely to ask who is Wade Rubottom working for now? And we are supposed to know. The secret of our success in dealing with enquiries of this kind is—we might as well own up—*The Motion Picture Almanac*. There must be about 20,000 biographies in this year's edition, and our enquirers might pick on any of them. So we turn the pages of the *Almanac*, leaving the enquirer on the line just long enough to think we are turning it all up in the files. Stymie Beard's real name is Matthew Beard; Siegfried Rumann weighs 200 lbs.; Kyohiko Ushihara is a director and is married.

Besides biographies there is something like a ton of weighty knowledge here about films made, where they are made, who makes them and how much they cost. We have only one squawk. The names of the great ones of the past are not included. To name a few stars of the silent screen: Bill Hart, Pearl White, Rudolph Valentino, Wallace Reid. Such names should be included in the biographies. We can't all have the *Almanacs* since the beginning, and the films and film people of the past should be included. One other observation: this *Almanac* seems bigger than last year's, which in turn was bigger than that the year before. All this piling up of records, of data, of new and old things in the film world, needs assessing each year: needs perhaps a summary of achievement and a pointer to the future.

And while Mr. Terry Ramsaye, who edits this monument, is thinking that over, let me make one suggestion to the Government of the United States. Britain crowns her kings over the old stone of Scone. Let all American presidents in future be sworn in on a stand built entirely of past and present issues of *The Motion Picture Almanac*.

All the grateful movie magazine editors in the world would gladly kick in for such a fitting act of homage.

The Editor—SEE

In presenting Britain on the Screen we should show

DEMOCRACY in its WORKING CLOTHES

urges John Grierson, discussing the kind of films Britain should send to the New York World's Fair

WITH the great nations blaring their messages across space the quieter aspects of international address do not seem very urgent. Shall we worry about the pictures we show at next year's New York World's Fair when, who knows, it may take a flotilla of destroyers to escort them there? Yet, wandering over the States and Canada recently, I got the impression that these pictures we are building up to send overseas may be just as important as the noisy interventions from Godesberg and elsewhere. People were asking, everywhere, where Britain stood in the present war of ideas, and they expected, I am afraid, a very concrete answer.

One felt that ultimate alliances depended upon that answer. Talk propaganda projection, dramatising yourself, bringing yourself alive to others as much as you please, you come back inevitably to the fact that alliances are living things based, not on fleeting impressions of might, or fleeting appeals to ancient sentiment, but on a lively and day-to-day sense of common purposes and co-operation in effecting them.

Using the word democracy a great deal in our international stand, it has become inevitably the binding principle for the United States and the Empire countries, and the framework within which our picture is expected. Unfortunately, we in Britain take the notion too much for granted. It is, in our common speech, more of an academic concept than a fighting principle by which we measure the every-day achievements of society and of our personal citizenship. It is a very different matter in America. There, under Roosevelt, and as a result of the national reorientation since 1930, they are riding on a wave of active democratic consciousness and inordinately busy with social reconstruction and the relating of the personal self to problems of public service. When Britain appears in its international role as a pillar of democracy, the picture they expect from here is a somewhat detailed picture of just those personal freedoms and social goods which the pillar upholds.

We have, of course, a great deal to tell about our contribution to constructive democracy for we have as fine a record in matters of housing and health, education and the public welfare as any country. If we do not tell it, it is because we are, as a nation, still very diffident about appearing in our working clothes. In that diffidence one may see, per-

haps, the effect of generations of Empire building and the influence of that caste system which one might expect in so old and solid a country. But it is nonetheless a factor which embarrasses and even prevents true cultural relations with our fellow democracies overseas. We present our pageantry, show off our Navy, make play with the institution of Royalty and they are, of course, powerful and valuable symbols of solidity likely to impress young peoples. But the young peoples by this time have made their own romance, and, coming out of a new industrial and socially conscious age, the measure of achievement and national pride is more likely to be in the rehabilitation of Mississippi Valleys and the health departments of the cities. "What world are we building?" is, significantly, the guiding theme of the World's Fair.

Hard as it may be to doff our ambassadorial dress and show ourselves as we really are, it is expected of us. As we put the notion of democracy to the national mast-head we oblige ourselves to give the world the first real and intimate sight of Britain the world has ever had.

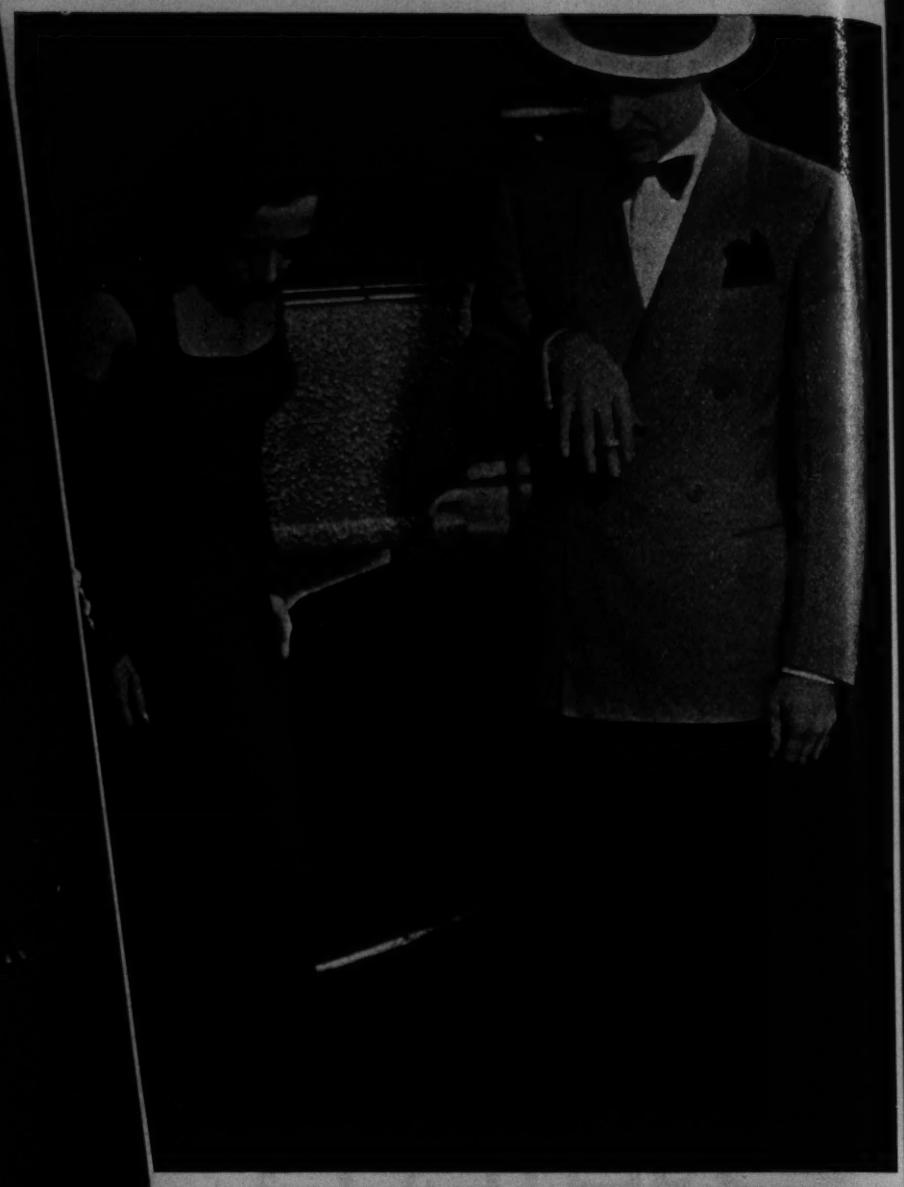
Some of us have been laying a plan by which effect can be given to this idea in New York next year. We hope, of course, that there will be exhibitions to the general public in which Britain's most dramatic feature films and short films will be shown, but the hub of our idea is that we should show to each section of the American community what Britain is doing in regard to their particular interest. The American Government Departments will see what we are doing in national health, agricultural communications, vocational guidance of the younger generation, or, say, in economic replanning of Scotland. The people interested in child welfare will see what we are doing with our movements for re-housing, re-schooling, nutrition and physical fitness. The town planners and the smoke abaters will find that we, too, are doing good work with our slum problem and that behind the scattered housing estates of the country is a first-rate record of imaginative reconstruction. The method of approach is thus capable of interesting intimately an infinite number of audiences each on its own pet subject, and it provides at the same time a range of material as wide as the national life itself.

Pictures from "B.B.C.," "The Voice of Britain," "The Face of Britain," and G.P.O. films

CURIOUSLY enough, on that test, Britain is richer in films to-day than any country in the world, not excepting America. When it comes to a record of how we live and work, paradoxically it is this country which is so afraid of showing itself in its working clothes that has the materials of display ready. This is where the years of work of the E.M.B., the G.P.O., the Ministry of Labour, the Scottish Office, the far-seeing public relations departments of industries like gas and oil, and the pioneering work of film groups like G.B.I., Strand, Realist and others, come at last into focus. We have good films of communications, housing, health, child welfare and the teaching of citizenship, and Scotland, particularly has a fine picture to present of democracy in action. Conversely, we have few or none of the films which might have been expected from old ceremonial England. We have not one decent film on pageantry; our only film of the Navy was thrown together casually the other day from bits and pieces gathered from half-a-dozen sources; our only real film of the Crown is, the now exhausted news-reel account of the Coronation.

Many have deplored this poverty of films showing Britain's grandeur, but presently I think we shall be blessing the fact that Britain's infinite capacity for being illogical will again have given the right answer at the right time. A few holes need certainly to be filled up before the event. In films of agriculture, particularly agricultural research, we are almost criminally weak. We have nothing first-rate to show of our railway transport except *Night Mail*, though the story of our railway transport, and particularly of the London Underground, would be vastly interesting in America. We are weak in records of medical research and of those achievements in science which have international validity. We have not a single film describing our capacities in ship building. For the women of America we badly need a film on the work of the women's institutes and for the youth of America an account of how the new freedom of youth has been expressed on this side of the Atlantic.

No doubt some of the people concerned will be inspired to make up the deficiency before the World's Fair opens, and someone will have to be assigned to the work of inspiration. It should be easy, for these industries and national groups will have the satisfaction of doing something for themselves in that their pictures will help them to define their own relations to the community. They will do something to fill out the picture of Britain, and therefore do something for their country. Valuably, at a time like this, they will be helping to articulate the constructive democracy we are now so anxious to save for the world. I like to think, too, that after the Fair is over, the educational film collection for British children will be the richer for this special effort. After all, it is there that the ultimate importance lies.



HOT POTATO

An article about LEE TRACY which introduces a brilliant new writer, Robert S. Blees, to SEE. Stills by the author.

It was Osgood Perkins, in *The Front Page*, who yelled to the police, "Get Hildy Johnson! The son of a bitch stole my watch!" and thereby made three or four reputations at one crack. He made his own, those of Messrs. Hecht and MacArthur, who had written [the play between beers, and that of a would-be magician named Lee Tracy, who was, and still is to many and sundry, the aforementioned Mr. J.

Currently Mr. Tracy is another well-meaning dope named Harry Van in the turn-'em-away *Idiot's Delight*, which is nice work, too, but there are still a lot of people who won't be satisfied until Hollywood opens its arms once more and admits, "Lee, we love you." And lets him flutter his hands, whine an incredulous "Wha-aa-aat?" every thousand feet, and wrap a camel's-hair coat around his body in a way that is the despair of every fashion editor in the country.

Manhattan's West 40's and 50's remember Tracy as the boy who made the leisure lassies wonder if those nasty reporters didn't have possibilities after all. Hollywood can't picture Tracy as anything but a newspaperman, either, since he starred in *Blessed Event* and forever after made "fast-talking" and "Lee Tracy" as close as this in the publicity releases shot out from the Coast. After *Viva Villa*, to be sure, Hollywood couldn't picture Tracy as anything at all, because he got his name in the papers and his person in a Mexican jail, two facts which may be jake when single, but 100% T.N.T. to the movie biz when in conjunction.

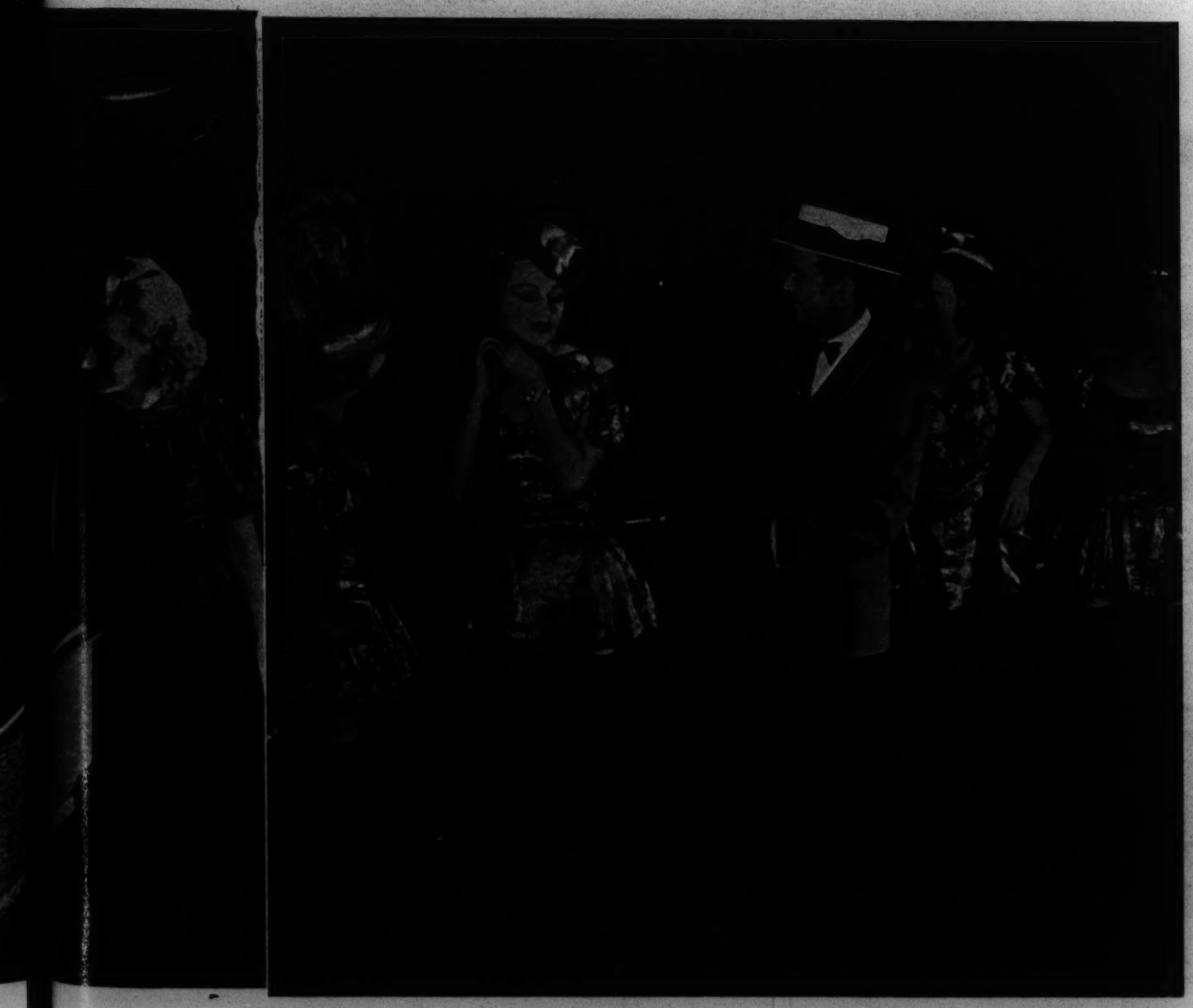
So for too-many-years now, Tracy has been the uncomplaining victim of a nice, dignified boycott, and done little more than get married and fall in love with boats and sail out to Honolulu and cut up touches with a few friends—until Mr. Sherek had the most productive thought of the London summer and hired him to take over Massey's role in *Delight*.

After all, it is not like a Tracy, of the St. Louis, Missouri, Tracys, to kick about the way anybody treats him. Not when he has a boat he likes to sail in and a wife. Although the 62-foot contraption is a long ways down the pike for a lad who toured all the ten-twent'-thirt' houses in the U.S. for coffee-an' during those lean years, to coin a phrase, after the War. There were years of doing magic tricks, of all things, and years of vaudeville, good, bad and indifferent. And years in *The Bat* and *The Cat and the Canary* and every other spine-tickler on the boards. "Thrillers?" he'll ask you now. "Give me a scream and a skeleton and I'll run up a play that'll scare your pants off."

But Tracy finally got to New York, and in a little piece blatantly called *The Show-Off*, which was merely one of the ten best money-makers America has ever known, and which set Tracy up as a name to be reckoned with. Then, it seems, somebody sold Jed Harris an option on a play with the sweet title of *Broadway*. *Broadway* did right well, running two years or so, and all that time Lee Tracy was the star. (*Broadway*, incidentally, was That Thing the Laemmle family paid out a reputed $200,000 for and made into a movie that showed a night club to end all night clubs, with camera angles even Busby Berkeley wouldn't attempt if he were in a trance.) After *Broadway* came the tour-de-force of Charlie and Ben, the newspaper nit-wits, which gave Tracy the chance to be, then and there, the Platonic Idea of a Chicago inkslinger. And Tracy didn't muff it.

On the contrary, he jumped into it with both feet, he bit off chunk after chunk, and discovered that he was able to chew them all. The public *lo-oved* it. That Hollywood would immediately hasten bearers of good tidings was not unusual, nor was Mr. Tracy's first appearance in a pot-pourri called (with no intention to suggest any person, living or dead, or any play, especially one called *Broadway*) *Big Town*. *Big Town* was good, but Tracy was better, and he landed the Winchell part in *Blessed Event*. Just when newspapermen were *persona grata* on the screens of the nation, too, and when fancy business with the hands was considered the highest form of art. Not that Tracy's air massages are "business." They're not; they're Tracy, and the more there are the better I like it. But *Blessed Event*, not only a minor *succès d'estime*, was also a *succès de box-office*, and all was rosy for Lee, who, among other things, talked in the film for three minutes without a break.

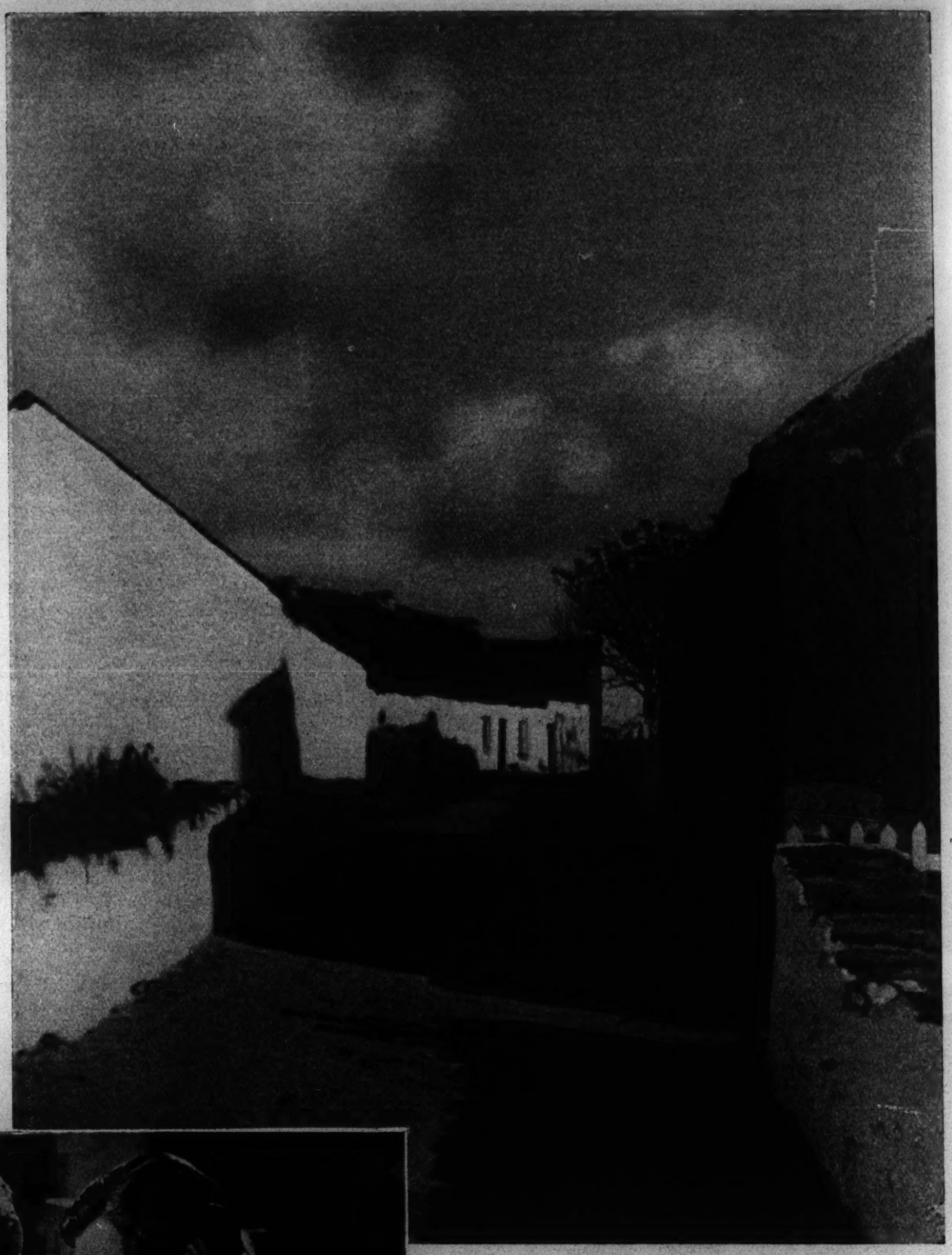
So Warners liked him, and so Paramount liked him, and darned if that old star-hoarder, M-G-M, didn't like him, too, and finally sign little Lee up to a long-term contract. For them he did Sam and Bella (*Boy Meets Girl*) Spewack's *Clear All Wires*, with Benita Hume opposite. Things were better, and might now be even best, had not a casting joe decided Tracy was the answer to the newspaperman problem in *Viva Villa*. *Villa* called for a location trip to Mexico, where that incident began with Tracy and ended with a note from the Mexican government, shocked shrieks from the women's clubs of the U.S., abject horror from Hollywood producers, and a long vacation for the fall guy. Unfortunately, Mr. Tracy was it—the hot potato of the season.



Which could, of course, be another Hollywood Rise and Fall, but happily isn't. From London the new Harry Van's doings have seeped over to America, into the eyes and ears of the movie world, and even into the thoughts of a couple of those producers. Those shouts you're beginning to hear would be the London representatives of certain movie companies, who have discovered Lee all over again. But it's only Hildy Johnson, with a crack at a tap-dance instead of a typewriter, with a few more movements that are in the script and a few less that aren't. Still it's Hildy, they'll tell you, and it all adds up to something the public wants. So Warners, they say, like him now, and Paramount has been considering. He has, as it were, come back. Which is O.K. with this kid, homesick for a few more heroes with high opinions of themselves. Too long without Tracy is as bad as Fred without Ginger, and it's time it stopped.

IN the name of GOODNESS

by John Grierson



Top right: A scene from Flaherty's "Man of Aran." *Above: "The Story of Louis Pasteur."*

Cinema in the service of religion crops up yet again. It is always cropping up. You might say it is one of these problems that are so happy cropping up that no one does anything about them. The one trouble about making the word flesh is that there is nothing left to blether about.

The churches obviously prefer blethering for they have been on this particular gambit as long as I remember. When we started talking of films in the service of education and citizenship they were already next rostrum to us on the Hyde Park Corner of film notions. The first film book written in England was written from the churches. I forget the name of the book but it was fat and pale blue and did say fifteen years ago everything the Film Institute and the morality councillors and the Payne Trust have been writing parish magazines about since. I remember with what tenderness the Reverend George Atkinson lent me his copy. I kept it and learned from it, for it was good stuff in that day and age.

The only consideration that makes it silly

now is that we who were talking simultaneously about films in the public service proceeded to do something about it. We found money somehow; we made films somehow; we built the documentary and educational film movements; we founded the Empire Library and other libraries; we grew a school of film makers; we made hundreds of films; we out-wrote, out-spoke, out-manœuvred our oppositions and drove our way to the screens of the country.

I say this impatiently and for good reason. In our struggle to vary the synthetic diet of the cinemas and find another depth or two in our bright and lovely art, I have, heaven forgive my innocence, expected a lot from the churches. They have the halls in thousands and the audiences in hundreds of thousands; people to talk to, waiting to be talked to with bright and lovely arts. They have, even if they have gone lazy and lost their sense of the privilege, a basic contact with the life of Britain. Back of them, is the commission to tell where the spirit gets off at, and speak of the deepest things that men may know. Just think of it from a film point of view. No fancifying, or doping with synthetics, or gearing the stuff down, but a full-blown commission with the church bells ringing and the choirs in full blast. And there isn't anyone, anywhere, but is waiting for the word that will vitalise, release, heroicise, and tell him where he gets off at. It is a terrific set-up, and when artists before now had the privilege of it they built cathedrals and painted pictures that are still the most inspiring things in civilisation.

But with so great an opportunity for patronage the churches are still blethering. They have plenty of money, have the easiest access in the country to plenty of money. They know that for lack of imagination or something or other they are failing in their job of inspiration. Their emptying churches tell them so; the increasing disrespect for the personnel of the church tells them so. But that commission of theirs is not thereby altered and how could it be? The deep things have still to be spoken in the name of religion, if men are not to go empty in their bellies. And here is an art that could speak them. It is not the only art, but it is the one that could speak them simply and widely and that is most important thing for religion. You would think that the job was easy and it is. They have only, at worst, to waste a million or two finding and building the people who will use the film to inspire people, and they waste that much now, and more aridly. Would the people of our bright and lovely art come through? There never has been a sponsorship of the cinema that asked for inspiration, and the art is panting for it. It would be a miracle releasing with a single blast every good power in medium and maker alike.

But here we had better stop dreaming. That is the logic of it but so far from the likely reality that we need not bother much. These good church people are inert and nearly only talkers and the little that they ever do is terrible. The Methodists take a wonderful story like Tolstoy's *Where Love is God is* and add the sludge of utter commonness to their interpretation. It was not the producers' fault. I know, because I attended uncomfortably on the script and saw them debauch the theme; and in front of them was a fine and beautiful script from Cavalcanti which kept the spirit of the thing, but was turned down. Ironically, it was the film men who tried to put beauty and spirit into the thing; it was the churchmen who talked synthetics and box office.

On that example there isn't a Wardour Street producer I wouldn't sooner trust near the springs of inspiration than some of the churchmen who have been fiddling about with films. If the religious conservatives—and I am one—say 'well, there are others who will see higher', I give you the latest utterance of the Hon. Eleanor Plumer in the *Church Times*. Miss Plumer is a great public servant and a good churchwoman and close enough to the film industry to speak of it with diffidence. But does she ask them to do the job of inspiration? Not on your life.

Listen: "The most satisfactory method is a committee working with the trade. The committee can decide what it wants, but the trade is the expert who knows what can and what cannot be filmed. A final scenario is chosen, shooting begins, and *all the while the committee keeps a close eye on the work*." Is that, do you think, the road to anywhere? Why it sounds like another damned panel of the Film Institute.

The mistake is a simple one and not only the mistake of thinking a group of matter-of-fact non-artists equals one feat of imagination. It is the mistake of thinking that the inspirational bit of the job will come from the church side and the technical bit from the artist. It is the old and common mistake of treating the artist as a chauffeur. You tell him where to go and he, knowing his motors, takes you. But the fun of the fallacy is that in asking for chauffeurs, you get them. Set so glibly on determining the road, your committee only arrives, as ever, at its own composite little nowhere.

To me Miss Plumer, good woman though she is, is just as hopeless as her predecessors. If the churches want the greatest service from this art, it is not just the cameras and the pictures that it wants, but the power that makes pictures light up and talk. That is the artist's power and no backseat driving is any equivalent. Unfortunately for the good people, the artist and the inspirer tends to come in strange guises, and how many churchmen would be likely to know him if they met him? He will not seem to profess very much faith; it is highly doubtful if he will appear in the wings of a Sunday school teacher; but the measure will not be on these lower parrotwise levels of the spirit. It will be in the deep profession of faith and the arduous act of service which are implicit in every work of art whatsoever. Your artist will not for a certainty take a theme like *Where Love is God is* and forget to put in the faith and the beauty that made Tolstoy great. Every commandment he may break, but not that.

Another thing. He will do his job with themes even less explicitly related to religion than the Tolstoy one. I do not know why it is that the church people, like the advertising people, should make so much of the brand mark on their product. They don't need to. Inspire people in those values on which religion properly insists and you do religion's job. Teach the fear of God, humility and loving one's neighbour as oneself and you do the church's teaching. But no. The church people go on insisting on the dumbly explicit. Hear Miss Plumer again. "We need the screening of the parables in modern dress, the Prodigal Son, The Sower, The Great Supper, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Good Samaritan. We should try to approximate the incidents in the parables to the incidents of modern life *so that they may drive their lesson home*. We want films of the parish church, how it was first built; what the different parts mean. There should be films of our cathedrals, films of the religious houses, films showing our great inheritance from the Fathers and the Saints". It sounds all very boring already.

I don't think that the churches will do much with films. They are still a long mile away from the right idea. You and I and the millions of others will take our *Good Earth* and *Pasteur* and *Man of Aran* and *Song of Ceylon* happily and know they are the real thing. We will curse the fact they are so few. We will curse the churches in particular for not making it possible to have more of them, though they have the commission from society to give us more. The film makers among us will see the deeper possibilities of an O. Henry story or a Tchekov or a play by Bridie or a fairy tale of Hans Andersen. We will know it is what the churches are really seeking but are too blind—almost too irreligious—to see. We will go on fighting our way through the commercial cinema and, occasionally, someone fantastically out of the argument like old Arthur Dent will permit some excited young director to add to the great exceptions. But the churches, you may be sure will not know anything of that long and bitter war to make films a medium of inspiration and do their work for them. They will know no more and help no more than they have done in the fight of the documentary people to do their social work for them. They will still be talking and, in the enthusiasm of their talking, the deed will be satisfied and be dead.

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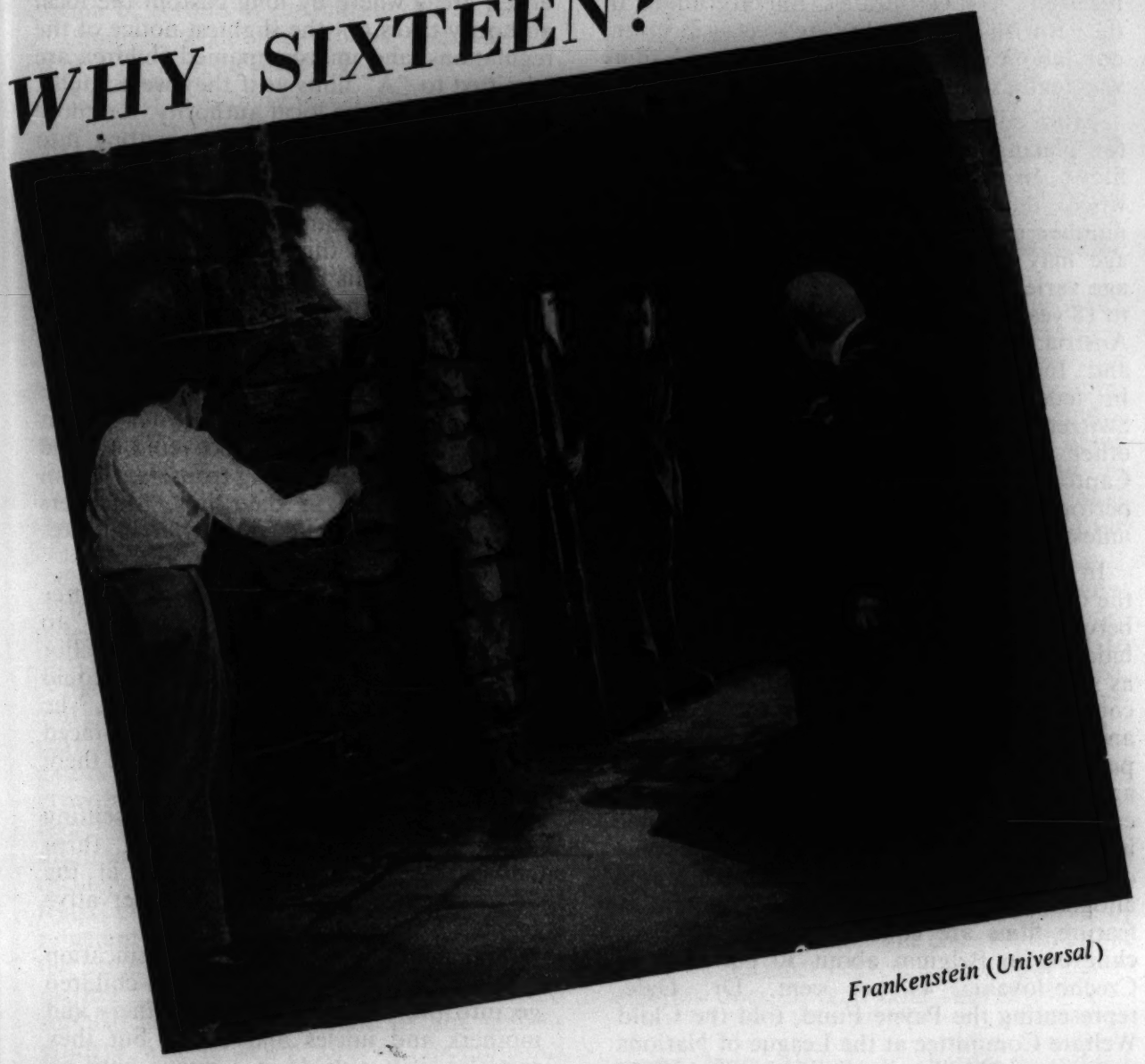
WHY SIXTEEN?



Frankenstein (Universal)

CENSORSHIP AND THE ADOLESCENT

An authoritative examination of the Censorship problem specially written for SEE by Richard Ford.

IT is generally admitted that certain types of film are undesirable for children. Exactly which types are undesirable is not always agreed; the opinions of psychologists and social bodies frequently differ on this point.

There are two ways—one positive and the other negative—by which children can be prevented from seeing what is undesirable (assuming for the moment that the interpretation of "undesirable" is not in dispute). There is the positive method—the provision of a sufficient supply of suitable films, which will so educate the taste of children that they will have no desire to see any others. This at present and for many years to come can only be a theoretical objective. There is no use postulating such a method if the results remain amid the clouds of pious hope and lofty intention. What can be done, and is being done, is the provision of special children's matinees at which a selection from the all-too-few suitable feature films are exhibited. The child himself is the stumbling-block; he will not pay to see the most uplifting film ever made if he thinks it is going to be boring.

In this country the negative method—the Censorship—has been in existence for many years, and, unlike the censorship in most other countries, it is not imposed by the State, but by the Film Industry itself. In 1912 the (then) Association of Kinematograph Manufacturers, the only important trade organisation at the time, set up the British Board of Film Censors. Under the impetus given by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the Board became recognised as the proper authority to grant a Certificate, when in 1921 the Middlesex County Council inserted a clause in its cinema licences that no film might be shown unless it held a Certificate from the Board. That rule has now become universally accepted by all local authorities, who retain, and exercise their power to alter the Certificate on any ground they think proper. The local authority may

(*a*) grant a "U" Certificate to an "A" film (*Snow White*, for instance).
(*b*) grant permission to show a film which has been refused any Certificate by the Board.
(*c*) restrict films with "A" Certificates to persons over 16, and prohibit the entrance of all younger persons.

In 1922 the Home Office approved the conditions which had been formulated and issued a recommendation to all licensing authorities recommending their adoption. Since that time they have become known as the "Model Conditions", and are now imposed by practically every authority in the country. The question of the legality of these "Model Conditions" came before the High Courts in 1924, when it was unanimously decided that the conditions were *intra vires* and enforceable. (Lord Tyrrell. Broadcast reprinted in *The Listener*, 30th March, 1938.)

In the early 1930's there was an epidemic of local censorship, which altered large numbers of the Censor's decisions. At the present time, even occasional action on the part of a Local Authority arouses considerable publicity. The system of censorship is, in fact, firmly established, and is generally regarded with favour and even admiration by the film trade, the local authorities, social bodies, and the film-going public. The only class which thinks it ridiculous are the persons under 16, and the writer finds himself in some sympathy with their difficulties.

What are the actual regulations laid down? Here is the L.C.C. interpretation—a standard opinion. (L.C.C. Rules of Management, 1938):

1. No film shall be exhibited unless—
   (*a*) it has been passed by the British Board of Film Censors as suitable for exhibition as a "U", "A", or "H" film, or
   (*b*) it has received special permission to be exhibited from the Council.

   This rule does not apply to newsreels, which are outside the scope of the censorship.
2. If the Council does not agree with the category awarded by the censors, it is at liberty to alter the category and to insist that the alteration is observed by the exhibitor.
3. The certificate awarded by the censor must be exhibited on the screen for at least ten seconds (this condition is scarcely observed).
4. The categories are:
   "U"—Universal Exhibition to adults and children alike.
   "A"—"Adult" Exhibition. In the words of the Council this means "*No 'A' film shall be exhibited at the premises during the time that any child under or appearing to*

be under the age of sixteen years is therein unless the child is in the company of a parent or bona fide adult guardian of the child."

"H"—"Horrific" Category, i.e. for public exhibition when no children under 16 are present. "No 'H' film shall be exhibited at the premises during the time that any child (whether in arms or not) under or appearing to be under the age of 16 years is therein."

These categories have to be clearly displayed on the Category Boards at the entrances to the cinema, and on all posters and advertisements, including "trailers".

THE "H" category was introduced in 1933, but it was not used until 1935. At present only a few local authorities recognise it. The total number of films originally given an "H" certificate by the censors is well under ten; but it is worth noting that in 1938 several old films of the horrific type which formerly held an "A" certificate were reissued with an "H" certificate.* There is no doubt that the Board of Censors has realised the harm that can be done to the child's mentality by allowing it to experience fright and terror, even in the company of a parent or guardian.

Such is the existing form of censorship in England. In Scotland there is considerably more laxity, and only recently has some attempt been made to exclude children from seeing "A" films unaccompanied. The quantity of feature ("dramas over 3,000 feet long" is the Board's meaning of "feature") films certified by the Board varies from year to year. In 1934 out of 688 feature films 278 received "U" certificates and 410 received "A". In 1936 out of about 650 subjects, 329 received "U" certificates. But according to the British Film Institute's classification, only about one in nine of these "U" films was really suitable for children.*

Most countries have recognised the need for placing restrictions on certain types of film.† In some, including not only those where there is no censorship, but also a number of others, children below a certain age may not be admitted to cinemas. This age varies from 5 years in Iran and Portugal, to 18 years in certain parts of Switzerland and Austria. In a few countries such as Japan and India, there are no legal restrictions. In federal countries such as U.S.A. and Switzerland there are local differences. In other countries (Sweden and some Swiss Cantons) children may not be admitted to performances which end after a certain hour, unless they are accompanied by their parents.

In most cases the censors are appointed by the Government. There is also the distinction between countries where children are forbidden to attend any film which is not passed as suitable for them, and those, such as this country, where discretion is left to the parents and children may only be admitted if accompanied by an adult. There seems to be no agreement in standards or practice. In most countries the age is fixed at 16, but in some it is as high as 18 or as low as 12. In some countries children under 5 or 6 are refused altogether. In Denmark about 25 per cent of feature films are considered unsuitable for children, in Belgium about 30 per cent, in Czechoslovakia, 43 per cent. Dr. Dale, representing the Payne Fund, told the Child Welfare Committee at the League of Nations that out of 336 films produced in the U.S.A. in 1935, only 30 or about 10 per cent were regarded as suitable for children. About 21 per cent were regarded as fair, and nearly 70 per cent were considered unsatisfactory. (No wonder the organiser of children's matinees has a hard time to find a supply of suitable films!)

It is curious that in the U.S.A.—the most film-minded public in the world—there are scarcely any restrictions on the attendance of children at the cinema. In practically no States are the regulations as to the films which may be exhibited framed with special reference to the needs of children. It is estimated that eleven million boys and girls under 14 attend cinemas in the U.S.A. every week.

Complaints against the censorship are developing into jokes. Even *Punch* (29th June, 1938) has a dig at the abuse:

Urchin: "Oi, Miss! Can we come to the concert?"

Social Worker: "Yes, of course you can."

Urchin: "Do we 'ave to bring our adults?"

The fact is that "children" (i.e. persons under 16) are becoming very ingenious in devising methods for circumventing the regulations. This artifice only applies, of course, to areas where the regulations are strictly enforced. The writer could name a dozen areas where by long custom the local authority takes not the slightest notice of the regulations, and unaccompanied children are admitted to "A" films as if they were adults. But the stricter the local authority, the more audacious the devices used for getting into the cinema. The usual practice is for "children" to wait outside the cinema until a suitable adult appears. "Take me with you, please mister", is the verbal approach, and the boy pushes his pennies into the hand of the adult. Once in the cinema he disappears. There is no attempt at pretending to be a " bona fide adult guardian."

But boys who are determined to see an "A" film will attempt more ingenious methods. They have been discovered dressed up in an elder brother's long trousers, with an unlighted cigarette in their lips. Managers have reported that faked birth certificates have been produced.

When the Erith Education Committee were discussing the alteration from "A" to "U" certificate for *Snow White*, Councillor Luck referred to the fact that children could and did see "A" films. "Many children," he said, "wait outside cinemas for simple-faced persons like me and then ask us to take them in—and I must confess we do."

Lady Worsley Taylor, J.P., representing Women's Advisory Committees in three counties, referred to this loophole at the 1938 Conference of the Central Conservative Women's Advisory Committee:

> "What is the good of this classification ('A' and 'U') when not only can children go into the cinema with their fathers and mothers and uncles and aunts, but they can also wait outside in a queue until an old person comes along, and say: 'Please can we go in with you?' As that humorous writer of sub-leaders in *The Times* expressed it; the term 'Adults Only' is as misleading as 'Permanent Wave'."

This kind of sharp practice is evidently widespread. Recently the writer learnt of a far more unpleasant practice which is growing in some districts in London, where youths of 17 or 18 hang around the cinema entrances, waiting, in the role of "adult guardians", to find girls of 14 or 15 who want to see the film, and towards whom the youths have intentions which may not be indicated until they are side by side in the blackness of the cinema.

ALL these jokes, complaints and delinquencies suggest all too clearly that the border line at 16 years old is being abused. It may be argued that any other age limit would arouse the same difficulties. The abuse could, of course, be solved by drastic action—the complete prohibition of entrance to persons under 16, whether accompanied or alone, on the part of the local authority. This would have the most serious effect on box office receipts, and would lead to a downward revaluation in all "A" films. Every exhibitor is only too anxious to help the local authority to enforce the existing regulations. The discovery of a boy or girl under 16, alone in the cinema during an "A" film, may easily lead to prosecution, a fine, unwelcome

* Among the films thus treated are, according to "Variety": *The Vampire*, *King Kong*, *Frankenstein*, *Hands of Orlac*, *Devil Doll*, *Invisible Man*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Ninth Guest*, *Dracula's Daughter*, *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *Vampire Bat*, *Son of Kong*, *Werewolf of London*, *House of Doom*, *Mark of the Vampire*, *Man who Changed His Mind*, and *Bride of Frankenstein*.

* British Film Institute Conference, 1937, Mr. Simon Rowson.

† "Recreational Aspects of the Cinema," by S. W. Harris of the Home Office; and League of Nations Reports.

publicity, and a licence in danger of being withdrawn. But how can the Manager of the cinema be certain of preventing the entrance of children, when they adopt such skilled tactics? He is in an unenviable position.

The other possibility which may one day be considered is the alteration of age from 16 to 15 or 14. The age at which adult films can be appreciated is surprisingly low in urban areas where cinema-going has been long established as a juvenile habit.

The growth of the attitude of sophistication primarily depends on physical changes, which are the concern—the very serious concern of those who are competent to deal with adolescents in the cinema. For those who study children there is an intermediate stage of great interest, when the child begins to think he or she is old enough for adult films. This is especially noticeable in the closely populated areas of London. Managers of cinemas report that the children think themselves too old for "Kid's Shows" at a surprisingly early age. This is a natural reflection of semi-adult life which the children lead long before they are due to leave school —the older girls acting as substitute mothers, and the boys eager to earn money and to take part in adult life. The Payne Fund* investigators describe a series of cases to show the growth of this maturer attitude. "Certain fourth-graders showed in the most undisguised fashion a great interest in serial thrillers. They talked freely and spoke with frank enthusiasm. The sixth-graders were reluctant to talk. They admitted interest yet felt some shame at their interest in a 'childish' picture. Their attitude was one of affected sophistication. The attitude of the eighth-graders was however, one of spontaneous and frank disapproval, dislike, and disgust at serials. The steps were three in number—frank approval, affected sophistication, and mature disapproval."

IT is a common delusion to suppose that the really harmful element for children in an "A" film is a long intimate love scene. Nothing is farther from the facts. But let it be quite clear that we are discussing children, and not adolescents. Children are bored—enormously bored—by love-making on the screen. The mere sight of a woman who seems likely to

fulfil this function in the story may provoke disapproval from the children. The reason is obvious. Love-making is, *par excellence*, an activity which holds up the action of the film. It is, therefore, a bugbear. Children cannot identify themselves with the emotions being expressed. Kissing provides the nadir of tedium, and if long drawn out, it provokes the most violent catcalls. In the opinion of the children, osculation is the thief of time.

The Payne Fund Report* gives details: "Most children of 9 gave very little response to love scenes. At 10 some were found to respond. At 11 and 12 others responded. Above 13 there was usually a definite response."

The L.C.C. Enquiry† is very precise on this point:

"All inspectors who mention it, and in this they are supported by most of the evidence of the teachers, are convinced that the morally questionable element in films is ignored by children of school age. The element which the adult would most deprecate to be put before children does, in fact, bore them."

THE Payne Fund, it should be added, financed a series of studies dealing with the effect of films on youth in the U.S.A. In 1928 a group of University psychologists, sociologists and educational experts were invited by the Motion Picture Research Council to plan a programme of study to discuss the effects of films on children. The investigations extended from 1929 to 1932.

The results of the investigations were published in a series of twelve monographs by The Macmillan Company, and the monographs were summarised in a further volume.

Recently these findings have been ruthlessly debunked by Dr. Mortimer Adler of the University of Chicago, in *Art and Prudence* (Longmans: New York. 1937.) This long philosphical work has been potted into an entertaining brochure, *Are We Movie-Made?* by Raymond Moley (Macy-Masius: New York. 1938. One Dollar). Mr. Moley quotes heavily from Dr. Adler, criticising the scientific accuracy of the Payne Studies, "monumental in the matters of expense, size and pretention". The condemnation of the methods of the several Professors and Doctors is something more serious than a mere academic teacup storm, and anyone taking a close interest in the subject of the effect of films on children, especially in encouraging delinquence, should certainly digest Mr. Moley's book before swallowing the much-vaunted findings of the Payne Fund investigators.

Is there any prospect that the age division of 16 will be reconsidered? Not at present. But there are reasons why a new and lower age division should be suggested:

1. The present age division is being abused, largely because persons under 16 find in some "A" films the type of entertainment which gives them pleasure.

2. The attitude of the inhabitants of urban areas towards cinemagoing has completely altered since the age division of 16 was imposed. Nowadays boys and girls of 14 are hardened film fans, and are far less likely to be mal-influenced by films at that age than were their fathers and mothers in their adolescence.

3. There is very little psychological support for the arbitrary choice of the age of 16, below which the person can, one supposes, be morally damaged and above which he or she is immune.

4. The age division of 16 does not refer directly to children but to adolescents. Public, and scientific, opinion is coming more and more to regard the effect of the film on the child of 6 to 11 as of far greater social importance than the effect on the adolescent, the basis of whose behaviour is already formed and whose physique is already mature.

These and other reasons prompt one to repeat, Why 16?

* 1928. U.S.A. "Motion Pictures and Youth," W. W. Charters.

† School Children and the Cinema. L.C.C. 1932.

SPAWN of the NORTH

Basil Wright reviews the new Henry Hathaway film, together with 'Marco Polo' and the newest and last Laurel and Hardy...

Spawn of the North (*Paramount*)

SPAWN OF THE NORTH could be both praised and attacked from the documentary point of view—praised for its vivid and atmospheric presentation of the Alaskan seascapes and the men who dwell and work in them at the salmon fisheries, and blamed for hitching on to them an emotional and personal story about the stellar passions of its cast, which mostly hails from Sunny California. Personally speaking, I prefer to remember it only as one of the few occasions recently when I have felt a sense of real enjoyment (entertainment, too, if you will) in the vast temples of the West End. This film, in fact, has something which the cinema of bygone days (*O quam te memorem virgo*) used to supply as a matter of course—action and thrills, the quickened pulse and the lump in the throat. You remember *Way Down East* and the like? The heroine with the illegitimate baby thrust forth into the night, and into the ice floe rushing towards the falls? There must be many—I think I am one of them—who will never quite get the same thrill as they did when Barthelmess snatched Gish from the icy jaws at the last impossible moment. Sentimentality, passion, and a high wind over sea and land ought to be as popular now as they were then, and perhaps they would be if we had a few more films like *Spawn of the North*.

You are not especially asked to believe in the story. But the tale of two buddies whose friendship splits when the one turns fish-pirate and the other sides with the law, strings along more convincingly than the conventional triangle, which is most divinely conspicuous by its absence. The two females stick to their men, and exhibit a gratifying toughness of demeanour when things get dirty. But the important point is that the story is worked out with liberal lashings of natural action and of the elements. There is a grand sequence in which a vast iceberg is detached from a glacier by the stentorian singing of "Mother Machree"; the scene is impressive and as bizarre as only Ma Nature can be, and the climax, when the fishermen shout and clang their bells as tons of ice slide into the water, is big enough without the subsequent smashing of a boat by the angry ice. There is a rough-house of vintage quality, which

makes old Polo's Pekin battle look like the tea-fight it really is—men fighting with axe, harpoon, and belaying pins by night, on the superstructure of the salmon-traps, with the Arctic waters lit by the glare of searchlights or flares. It is a real fight, and reminds us what really happens if you hit a man on the head with sharp and heavy metal, or fire a harpoon point-blank into his chest. And there is a magnificent finale, with black sheep buddy sailing himself and the villain into the crackling jaws of the glacier. You can smell the ice.

As for the emotional story, I like it immensely. For one thing it is brilliantly cast. Henry Fonda is very good as the law-abiding boy, and George Raft is really magnificent as his sinning friend. Moreover, Dorothy Lamour—rejoicing no doubt in her new-found freedom from the sarong—acts, and acts finely, as Raft's tough mistress. Add John Barrymore, as the sententious editor with a heart almost of gold, and Akim Tamiroff as the Russian fish-pirate—as bad as bad can be—and the usual excellencies of the small parts, and you have all you could ever ask for, even from Paramount's casting department.

All this brings us to the consideration of Henry Hathaway, the director. I am astonished to recall that he also made *Bengal Lancer*, but not even this fact will deter me from rating him very high—and that not because of Alaskan location work, but because of his sensibility and sensitiveness on the set. Observe carefully his direction of the scenes between Raft and Lamour. Note first the verisimilitude of the settings, second, the modest but unerring rightness of all his camera angles, and third, the sense of the ebb and flow of passion between two tough but inarticulate humans, which makes you forget to be superior even if hokum is at its height. He even gets away—triumphantly—with the Our-Dumb-Friend angle, supplied by Slicker, a fantastically intelligent performing seal. Fourthly and finally, though perhaps the very essence of the story may have done it for him, one may praise the fine timing, which more than once carries an emotional scene (twice as slow as even Hollywood plays them) on the backlash of a smashingly fast action-sequence. The script would indeed plot itself as an elegant and satisfying graph, and I rather think it would also have received a good mark from Aristotle. It is certainly the first time I have sat through a two-hour film and not found it a moment too long.

Poor Polo!

The Adventures of Marco Polo is so ineffably bad a film that the modest critic must make a point of producing his most kindly microscope (all components rose-tinted) to scrutinise the opus very carefully for its good moments. Such a scrutiny reveals one or two dramatically effective shots (camera work by Mate), such as the prisoners tied to stakes ready for execution by arrow, which has an authentic Doré touch; and a pleasing back-view glimpse of Kublai Khan travelling through the streets of Pekin in a howdah supported by *two* elephants. It also reveals the superb efficiency of Basil Rathbone, who brings a semblance of life to the stilted and melodramatic figure of Ahmed, the naughty prime minister who feeds live girls to his vultures and disposes of male friends into a lion's den conveniently situate under the front parlour. Rathbone, cold as ice and twice as pellucid, stalks through the film regardless of everything and everyone, intent only, one presumes, on preserving against enormous odds his reputation as a good technician. Which word brings us, alas! to the consideration of Gary Cooper, who either has no technique if not directed well, or, more probably, just gave up trying. At any rate he trots out all the hackneyed old gestures with obvious boredom and strolls out of camera range with a shrugging sigh of relief.

One of the chapter headings of that old liar, Sir John Mandeville, runs, "Of the Faith and Belief of Prester John, but he hath not the full Belief as we have". This may serve as a suitable motto for Samuel Goldwyn, on whose mat the cat will no doubt shortly deposit the mangled remains of this film. Goldwyn's faith and belief is—quite rightly—in that Kali-like Goddess, Box Office, but it would be too kind to say that he has merely misjudged her this time. On the contrary, he has done what no human with a nose for receipts has any right to do. He has compromised all down the line. He has mixed up in a giant cocktail shaker all the wrong ingredients from *Lost Horizon*, *Mr. Deeds*, and *It Happened One Night*, and has given the shaking to Archie Mayo instead of to the maestro Capra.

The result is very much as though Lubitsch had woken up in Shangri La with a really vicious hangover. The possibilities of the plain narrative of Marco Polo's adventures have been ignored. Instead, it would appear that Goldwyn's first idea was to have a jolly joke and treat the whole film with the most sophisticated of modern Americanisms. Well, we could have taken it. But then—not having the full belief as we have—he wondered if this might not be satire (satire is poison to his Goddess), and so switched over to Romance with a rolling capital R. At this point he should have called the whole thing off, but no, here it is, in all its dragging length, cheapjack humour (Ernest Truex tripping up steps or frightened by squibs), Gary Cooper—oh so bored—teaching the art of kissing to Sigrid Gurie (a newcomer and a total loss), Kublai Khan (ruler of half the world) lolling about on a Quatorze the Fifteenth throne like a tired business man watching a set of dumb chorines, and Binnie Barnes—well, that will do; it's not her fault after all.

The joke, which is after all only a re-hash of *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, depends on pace and good dialogue; neither are here. The romance depends on personality and sex-appeal; the girl has neither, the man, as already indicated, is not bothering to use what he has. All that remains is the spectacle, but the big scenes themselves lack fire, and even the rough-house round the walls of Pekin is half-hearted. It is all a great pity, especially for the audience and, by implication, for Mr. Goldwyn, who has given us a lot of good stuff in the past and will no doubt give us more in the future. It is sad that he did not put this one on the shelf, but there, we all make mistakes sometimes.

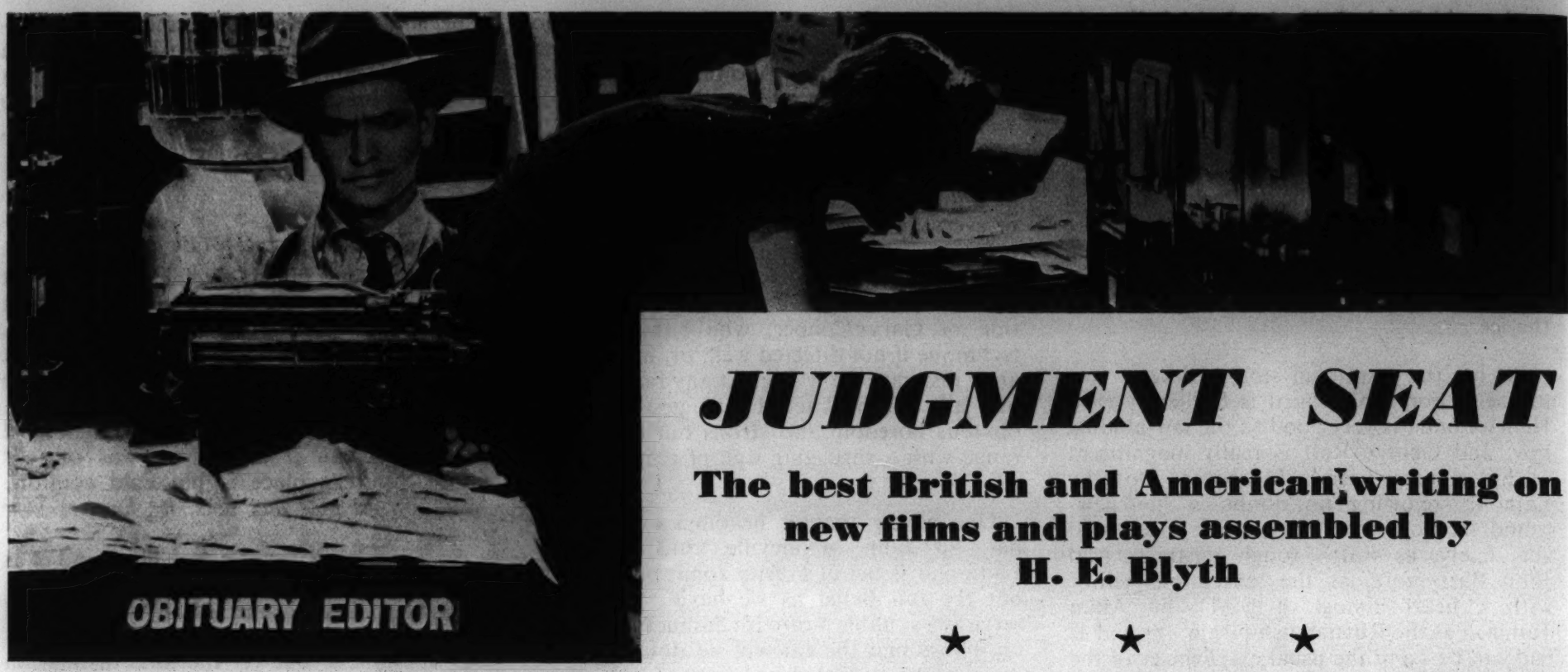
The last of Laurel

The blow has fallen; a final announcement from M.G.M. confirms the permanent break-up of the Laurel and Hardy team. It is hardly worth while imagining what disagreements have caused the tragedy; one can only, with bowed head, accept the fact. Even the news that Harry Langdon—a great comedian if ever there was one—is taking Laurel's place is but cold comfort. *Nous n'irons plus aux bois, les lauriers sont coupés.*

So *Blockheads* is their last film; and it is perhaps fitting that it should be, in every sense, the Laurel and Hardy to end all Laurel and Hardys, a lunatic swansong, plotless, reasonless, but yet the final distillation of all they have ever done. From the purist point of view we shall be compelled to rate it below the shapely and consistent *Way Out West;* but as fans, and may the curse of the Ritz Brothers light on all who are not, we may blast away all critical reasoning on the wings of a gigantic guffaw. The opening gag is irresistible. While shells burst and the troops go over the top in 1918 Laurel is left behind to guard the empty trench. A serious farewell to Hardy—a cataclysm of minnies and Verey lights—a date change to 1938—and behold the faithful soul still keeping faith to a long-vanished C.O., guarding the trench, now well overgrown with weeds and shaded by a monstrous pile of empty bully-beef tins. It is only when he shoots down a passing private plane that he learns that there is no longer a war. So the scene is set for his reunion with Hardy at a home for aged soldiers—Hardy, married to a tough little woman, and doomed, as ever, to disaster. How Hardy carries Laurel tenderly in his arms, under the erroneous impression that he has only one leg, how they climb and reclimb fifteen flights of laborious stairs, how the heroine is disguised as an armchair and constantly sat in, how James Finlayson makes one all-too-brief but electrifying appearance in full morning dress and a bad temper—all these, and many other delights, let the screen itself divulge. In such scenes the element of grotesque fantasy, which threads all through their saga, has never flowered so lushly.

Let us hope that a fund will be immediately forthcoming to buy and preserve all Laurel and Hardy films, and institute a cinema, with a constant repertory of their works. For apart from the nostalgia of old times, it is a shocking thought that a younger generation might have to grow up without the beneficent assistance of their ripe philosophy.

No more Laurel and Hardys—savour if you dare the full meaning of that phrase. Beddoes and Poe could invent no more macabre a dirge.



JUDGMENT SEAT

The best British and American writing on new films and plays assembled by H. E. Blyth

★ ★ ★

Love Finds Andy Hardy

(George B. Seitz—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)
Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone, Judy Garland.

This film is one of a series that has recently become surprisingly popular in America, apparently because it gives an accurate picture of life in a typical middle-class family. The episodes are for the most part briskly humorous or lavishly sentimental. But this particular item in the series should be of deep interest to all students of the history of morals, for it reveals quite unblushingly the erotic adventures of American adolescence, adventures which apparently receive the complete approval of society. A most respectable Judge, for example (acted by Mr. Lewis Stone), watches with a complacent smile while his son, under 16 years of age (acted by Mickey Rooney), is violently and passionately embraced by what appears to be a rather older young woman. The snobbery of the very young is quite as frankly displayed, and the whole forms a study as informative as it is distasteful to watch, though the arch humour with which everything is observed is perhaps an unnecessary turn of the screw. —*The Times*

Our favourite neighbours, the Hardys, are visiting again, this time in a felicitous little comedy which goes—and goes delightfully—under the name *Love Finds Andy Hardy*. The best of it is that love not only finds Andy Hardy, but finds him being played by Mickey Rooney who ranks second to Walt Disney's Dopey as our favourite movie hero of the year. Watching Mickey's Andy on the screen is practically as good as reading Mark Twain and Booth Tarkington; he's the perfect composite of everybody's kid brother.

If you must know what happens, we will report simply that the Hardys, severally and collectively, are up to their old crises again. There is the crisis of the new cook. There is the crisis of Marian's attempt at coffee-making. There is the crisis of Andy's car—a $12 down payment and $8 to go. The nicest thing about all the Hardy crises is that they resolve themselves so beautifully. There was Andy one minute, crushed under Polly's scornful cry of "gigolo!" just because he had promised to keep Beezy's girl away from the other Carvel young bloods; and there was Andy the next, leading the grand march with the little next-door girl who turned out to be not merely Judy Garland but the daughter of a musical comedy star. That's glory for you, and glory, too, for all the other Hardys—Lewis Stone, Fay Holden, Cecilia Parker and their friends—for turning out such a friendly, likeable show.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

The Rage of Paris

(Henry Koster—Universal)
Danielle Darrieux, Douglas Fairbanks, jun., Louis Hayward, Mischa Auer.

Gay and amusing as the picture is, the star's the thing. Mlle. Danielle Darrieux, whose exquisite oval face combines the tranquillity of a Dietrich beauty with the mobility of a Lombard comedienne, is making her English-speaking début, and a delightful début it is.

In two minutes you know that this girl is not carrying all her goods in the front window, yet from the start you know her for an actress of talent and technique. She calls up her resources sparingly. She specialises in contrasts, with a blinding flash of comedy here, a breathless moment of pathos there, each coming and going so quickly that you find yourself watching her in a state of eager anticipation, anxious not to miss a nuance.

Well, maybe, that's enough about the girl. If you don't like her, I give up. I like everything about her and can find nothing to criticise at all. The picture is brightly trivial—all about a poor French girl looking for a job in New York, being set up as a fictitious Parisian débutante by a boarding-house friend (Helen Broderick) and an ambitious waiter (Mischa Auer).

Unfortunately, the wealthy young man the syndicate desire to snare is a close friend of Douglas Fairbanks, jun., who had an encounter with the girl in her job-hunting days. His efforts to expose her are the picture.

But the little things make the fun. Like Mlle. Darrieux saying, "I can took it" or vamping Fairbanks' valet with conjuring tricks, or Auer seeing his dream-restaurant evaporate before his agonised eyes.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

I cannot, I am sorry to say, join in the rhapsodies that have greeted Danielle Darrieux in *The Rage of Paris*. When this truly adorable young French actress appeared as Marie Vetsera in *Mayerling* few were unimpressed by her abounding charm and loveliness and acting skill. In this trifle, meant solely to entertain, she is just thrown away. Really sensitive and exquisite personalities with intelligence and quality are so rare upon the screen that dramatic gifts such as Miss Darrieux undoubtedly possesses should be exploited in a manner worthy of their owner. To ask so delightful a creature to fool about with crazy comedy and pretend to outdo Claudette Colbert is to my mind just an outrage.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

The Amazing Doctor Clitterhouse

(Anatole Litvak—Warners)
Edward G. Robinson, Claire Trevor, Humphrey Bogart.

From that bit of masterful criminology that graced the Broadway stage last season comes a vigorous film of psychoses and gangster doings. You remember that Dr. Clitterhouse was something of a nut on the subject of subconscious reaction to crime. He had a notebook filled with data, which he collected and checked by indulging himself in nefarious businesses. It was a formidable play, made conspicuously sinister by the quiet underplaying of Sir Cedric Hardwicke. Now, with Edward G. Robinson in the title rôle, the play takes on a more obvious quality, more gusto, and quite a little more fun. It is no subtle study of the mind now. It is a gagged-up melodrama decorated

with that superb garishness which keeps Hollywood melodramatics alive. Mr. Robinson, no suave gentleman of advanced medicine, is more a reformed gangster than vice versa. No matter, the picture has a fine pace and a startlingly effective plot twist that make it the best of current gunplay. *See for yourself.* —*Stage*

Yellow Sands

(Herbert Brenon—A.B.P.C.)
Dame Marie Tempest, Wilfrid Lawson, Robert Newton, Belle Chrystall.

This simple story has been told with that understanding of simplicity which is one of the film's rarest virtues; the characters have been allowed to come naturally to life, and the director has neither patronised them nor allowed any taint of over-emphasis to spoil their emotions. The cool, fresh winds from the lovely western countryside seem to have blown away the cobwebs of the studio, and the quiet dignity of fields and sea provides the atmosphere which each player has so well absorbed. An old woman, studying the little community in which she lives and thinking of those she loves, is faced with the problem of her will. After she dies—and there is infinite sadness and dignity in her passing—her will is read to the consternation of some and the surprise of all; for she has left her money to the one person who least expects it, but whom, in her wisdom, she knows to be most worthy of it. Dame Marie Tempest is the old lady, gentle and tender but also shrewd and perceptive, but, above all, blessed with the tolerance which comes from understanding. As her idle, good-for-nothing brother, Mr. Wilfrid Lawson has also caught the spirit of understanding; he, too, has the wisdom of the countryside. In sharp contrast is Mr. Robert Newton's portrait of a hot-headed Communist, an idealist whose implicit belief in equality we may never for one moment question. The other members of the cast, and notably Miss Belle Chrystall and Mr. Edward Rigby, also give performances that discover depth of character in simple people; and our gratitude is due to the whole company and to their director, Mr. Herbert Brenon, for giving us so charming a picture of England.

—*The Times*

You come away from *Yellow Sands* pleasantly aglow. The picture does not attack your senses violently with machine guns, with tumultuous buffoonery. It gets you quietly like a tranquil sea at sundown. There is no hilarity, no misery, just a smile, a tear, and —poof!—it's over as quickly as a good time or a spot of trouble. Eden Phillpotts, the author, has fashioned a magnetic tale out of events which might happen in any family, events which at first would appear too humdrum to be worthy of record. Aunt Jennifer lives in a cottage on the Cornish coast, and as her end draws near she considers her family and how her modest estate should be disposed. The story ambles easily through Cornish scenes so wide, so grand, so cunningly framed, you long to fill your lungs with the wind. There are one or two technical faults—Aunt Jennifer's death is too protracted—but to dwell on these would be carping. See *Yellow Sands* and breathe.

—McKenzie Porter, *The Evening Standard*

SEE's Selection

The Film of the 11th Olympic Games	* * *
Spawn of the North	* *
Dawn of Iran	*
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The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse	*
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Other Films covered in this issue

The Adventures of Marco Polo

The Rage of Paris

Yellow Sands

This Man is News

White Banners

The Crowd Roars

Advance Democracy

Uncle Moses

This Man Is News

(David MacDonald—Paramount)
Barry K. Barnes, Alistair Sim, Valerie Hobson.

This is just about as neat a bit of comedy-thrills in the *Thin Man* tradition as you could wish to see. It only goes to show that money is not the thing that makes good films and that in this country our producers in their really sane moods have as good a chance as the chaps in Hollywood. This is a story of a Fleet-street reporter who finds himself in a series of thrilling situations—murders and such-like—that make him front-page news in his own paper. Barry K. Barnes is the reporter. He was good in *The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel* and better in *Who Goes Next?* but this film gives him his first opportunity in smart comedy and it shows that in this line he is a great find for British pictures. Valerie Hobson, also previously restricted to serious parts scores in a humorous role as the hero's wife, who plays quite a big part in the exciting and mystifying incidents and provides a comedy surprise at the end which is typical of the resourceful fun of the writers, Roger MacDougall and Allan Mackinnon. Dialogue, direction (by David MacDonald) and acting in this film fall nowhere short of the Hollywood standard. It is a picture you must see, especially for the delicious burlesque of a testy news editor by Alastair Sim.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

White Banners

(Edmund Goulding—Warners)
Claude Rains, Fay Bainter, Jackie Cooper, Bonita Granville.

As smug a bit of turn-the-other-cheek hokum as ever saw the light of script, yet performed so palatably and presented so unpretentiously that it is a lesson in how to sermonize on the screen. Mr. Lloyd C. Douglas' novel dealt with Hannah, a philosophical peddler of apple-peelers, who comes to the home of Professor Ward, straightens out all his and his family's problems, and goes away leaving her philosophy with them. In the rôle of Hannah, Fay Bainter is gallantly assured; in the rôle of Professor Ward, Claude Rains avoids all the homely clichés to make his character understandable and likeable. Kay Johnson, Jackie Cooper, Bonita Granville—they too keep Mr. Douglas' platitudinizing from becoming too blatant. The most satisfying feature of the picture is Miss Bainter's wardrobe. Frowzy is the word, gloriously, unbelievably, beautifully frowzy, and the consistency with which she shuns glamour must give the designer boys many a bad start, the public many a good one. *You know people like these.*

—*Stage*

The Adventures of Marco Polo

(Archie Mayo—United Artists)
Gary Cooper, Sigrid Gurie, Basil Rathbone.

Sam Goldwyn's latest excursion into the mists of long ago "with a cast of five thousand" is that delight of my childhood's days, *The Adventures of Marco Polo*. He had to fit Gary Cooper with a part, and having conjured up from the wilds of Brooklyn a new Norwegian glamour girl in Sigrid Gurie he was by some singular persuasiveness of his own able to enlist the help of one of America's finest playwrights, Robert E. Sherwood, in carrying out his singular and original ideas. The result is one of the most extraordinary and unintentional stimulants to laughter ever known to cinema-goers. It combines spectacle with absurdity, and has such a defiance of period in manner and speech, and so reckless a disregard of probability and the original facts as to enable the most uninstructed to derive cinematic enjoyment. In fact, the less sensitive the spectator the greater the pleasure. For there can be small satisfaction in all this medley of extravagant nonsense for anyone of extreme sensibility or with a regard for truth.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

Mr Samuel Goldwyn, a zealous man who likes to add to the culture and erudition of the world around him, has just spent a great deal of time and money in telling us that Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant of the thirteenth century, made his way across the outlands to the China of Kublai Khan and brought back (1) spaghetti, (2) coal, (3) gunpowder. At least, that is all that I can put on the credit side of the picture, the rest seeming to me just Hollywood with funny hats on, beaten before they started by an unfinished fragment by Coleridge. A new Norwegian blonde, Miss Sigrid Gurie, with wide light eyes and a

(*Continued over*)

Marco Polo—continued

generous mouth, demonstrates the thirteenth century kiss with Mr. Cooper, and Mr. George Barbier plays Kublai Khan like a sugar daddy at an Atlantic City outing. My favourite line in this historical survey is the Chinese general's greeting to Marco Polo before the siege of Pekin, "Siddown, have a drink."

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

The Crowd Roars

(Richard Thorpe—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Robert Taylor, Edward Arnold, Frank Morgan, Maureen O'Sullivan.

Magnificently done, this yarn of Robert Taylor as a young boxer who reads Gibbon in his bath, falls in love with a racketeer's daughter and commercialises fisticuff strategy. Despite the trite situations of hating to hit an old pal (whom he kills in the ring) and winning a losing fight at the sight of Maureen O'Sullivan at the ringside, Mr. Taylor and the director do a splendid job of entertainment. Frank Morgan as a shiftless daddy, Lionel Stander as a trainer, and Edward Arnold and Nat Pendleton as rival big-shots are immense. Every possible device of suspense and humour is used; the dramatics of boxing which the stage can never approach are fully exploited; and interludes of wooing and gangsterism balance a brilliantly-made picture which holds you for every second.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

The Crowd Roars is a stirring picture hung nicely between the tough and tender, the bitter and sweet. There is no lag between the many peaks of suspense, no anaemia in the cut-throats or the comedy. And it gives a sharp focus view of the twisters who wax fat on rotting sport. Taylor is up to his usual high standard. Frank Morgan's performance is magnificent.

—Mackenzie Porter, *The Evening Standard*

Advance Democracy

(Ralph Bond—The Four London Co-operative Societies.)
Fred Baker, Kathleen Gibbons.

This film marks the advent of the Co-ops into the field of cinema, and it is gratifying to note that the approach chosen is not a narrow one. For *Advance Democracy*, while containing much direct propaganda for the Co-ops, is nevertheless chiefly concerned in emphasising united action on the part of all men of goodwill against the menace of fascism. The director—Ralph Bond—has, it appears, deliberately chosen a style and story of the simplest type. He shows us a craneman from the London Docks and his wife. He lets us eavesdrop on their conversation over the evening meal; they disagree as to the value of the co-operative system, and lo and behold! the radio provides a timely talk on the subject by A. V. Alexander himself. The message sinks in. The man leads a group of his fellow workers to the May Day demonstration in Hyde Park. To call all this crude would be to beg the question; in fact, Bond may rightly argue that a broad and vital issue, so presented, will affect a greater number of ordinary men and women than if a more complex scheme had been chosen. Instead of frills or thrills there is a real sincerity, which is much strengthened by the excellent acting of Fred Baker and Kathleen Gibbons in the main parts.

Bond has done an excellent job in the cross-cut sequence of Alexander, his listeners and the re-enactments of early Co-op history; and the synthesis of marching songs at the end, devised by Benjamin Britten, is grand. One can foresee the possibility of a series of films of this type being of great value, although many may think that a simultaneous series of a less dramatic and more analytic nature should also be made. Incidentally, the film could not appear at a more apposite moment; it may articulate for many the emotions they have not yet learnt to analyse and control.

—C. M., *See*

Uncle Moses

(Sidney M. Goldin and Aubrey Scotto—Yiddish Talking Pictures.)
Maurice Schwartz.

This is an observant and intimate study of a Jewish community in a poor district of New York. The dialogue is in Yiddish, and the few captions barely describe the incidents of the film; the action is slight, stifled by a great deal of talk but also, no doubt, curtailed by the limited resources of those responsible for the production. The story is strangely fragmentary and inconclusive; it outlines the problems of this community—both personal and economic—but scarcely attempts to solve them. Uncle Moses, as the owner of a prosperous business, is looked up to and fawned upon by his less successful friends and relatives. But he is not happy. Some of his workers come out on strike, his young wife is pining and wants a divorce, and the nephew who helps him in the business is avaricious and resentful of all who threaten his inheritance. Uncle Moses loses his self-confidence and arrogance; he becomes suddenly an old man, tired and disillusioned. The characters talk incessantly, often with a sing-song intonation that becomes tedious to ears which cannot understand what they are saying. The acting is uniformly good and always expressive, and Mr. Maurice Schwartz, as Uncle Moses, gives a performance so rich in feeling, gesture and expression that his words need no translation.

—*The Times*

Uncle Moses, a Jewish film, will appeal to specialised audiences. The dialogue is in Hebrew, and the English captions are too few, and quite inadequate for the average cinema-goer. I found it most difficult to follow the slow-moving story, and the incessant droning speech of some of the principals. Maurice Schwartz as Uncle Moses, a wealthy Jewish clothier in that part of New York where Orchard and Delancey Streets meet, gives a very fine character performance, and is at all times convincing. His transformation from a massive and healthy man to a thin and feeble old one is highly realistic. It is unfortunate that the American producers of this film did not choose a subject with greater story material, though *Uncle Moses* will doubtless appeal to those better able to understand the Jewish life and language.

—Richard Haestier, *The Star*

The Film of the 11th Olympic Games

(Leni Riefenstahl—German.)

The Film of the Eleventh Olympic Games at Berlin, 1936, is one of the most remarkable sport films ever produced. Indeed, it is unique. While countless newsreels all over the world have shown separate sporting events, for the first time a full-length film has succeeded in revealing the "total" significance of all sports. For the first time in the history of sporting events what was real and serious, fierce and concrete, without pose and false pathos, has been subjected to the hand of a theatrical director. Miss Riefenstahl, however, has resisted the temptation to prettify the theme and allowed the Games to "come through" fairly evenly. Now and again her passion for "film composition" has marred one or two scenes. But the film will satisfy not only the sport specialist, who can watch the slow-motion movements of the world's finest athletes, but also the average spectator who did not see the Games. At first glance much of the film may appear as mere reporting, similar in character to the newsreels, but the expert will note the careful composition of the scenes—cutting took twenty months. What must have amazed everyone is the manner in which the cameras have been able to catch the facial expressions of the athletes during their most significant moments. In each sporting event the director has selected with consummate artistry for a close-up those movements of the particular athlete which the ordinary spectator cannot see. Miss Riefenstahl has "created" a film and not merely "pasted" together a prolonged newsreel of the Games. It is a film which will interest the whole world, for the whole world takes part in it.

—Berlin Correspondent, *The Sunday Observer*

Critical Summary.

That the work of Leni Riefenstahl, director of "The Blue Light" and "The White Hell of Pitz Palu", should to-day be almost unknown outside Germany is a sad thing indeed. Talent is not so plentiful in Europe that we may watch its disappearance unmoved, and the German cinema, living on, on the memories of its golden age of a decade or so ago, is adopting a strange policy in keeping Leni Riefenstahl to itself. To-day the great German directors are scattered—some are in exile in Hollywood, some have lapsed into oblivion, some are dead—and now only Leni Riefenstahl is left. She, admittedly, belongs to a later period, to the twilight of the golden age, but the memory of "The Blue Light" must still be treasured by many. Yet we can expect to see but little more of her work, and a career that started so promisingly would seem doomed to end in the toils of limited specialisation.

The Flashing Stream

(Charles Morgan—Lyric Theatre)
Margaret Rawlings, Godfrey Tearle, Felix Aylmer.

Mr. Morgan most skilfully adds the strange to the usual. Does the theatre need Love's Everlasting Argument? Then here it is, but conducted by Senior Wranglers, with the Dark Lady of the Logarithms replacing the Dark Lady of the Sonnets in the heart of one who is a lunatic, a lover, and a poet, a mathematician and a naval officer all in one. Does the public insatiably crave for the Girl adventuring alone among the sequestered and sex-hungry men? Then here she is, but in the form of My Lady Algebra, which is certainly novel. Are we interested in the menace of the skies, the doom dropping from that hell which man has made of the heavens? Then here is the exciting discovery of the aerial torpedo, which, magnetised by the enemy plane, will track it to its ruin, abolish the bomber, and make Britain once more an island, the sky once more a canopy of peace. Do we need to see the Bad Woman? Then here she is "wusser than ever," possessed of lust and jealousy, and robed in the colour of the flame she merits. Do we want young men talking bawdy and an old man setting upon coarseness the bloom of style? Then here they are, with the First Lord of the Admiralty in the latter office. All these are there, and they are much. Yet the play is more. It is a profoundly interesting study of intellectual and physical passion, especially of that single-mindedness which set and holds the course of greatness, and of all impatient of the common touch.

The scene is an Atlantic island used for experiments. The brilliant Commander Ferrers who is working on the aerial torpedo, has lost his colleague Selby in an accident, and the only mathematician competent to take his place is Selby's sister, Karen. Her arrival among the all-male research party, housed in suitably monastic quarters, is at once necessary and perilous. Devotion to pure mathematics does not deprive either man or woman of more sensual thoughts and aspirations. (Every man, as Hamlet said, has business and desire.) There is the Admiral's lady, with whom she can lodge, but that jealous and vindictive creature, coveting Ferrers who will have none of her, immediately does a most unlikely even incredible thing. She tries to ruin the experiment, and she turns Karen Selby out of her house, which means straight into the welcoming arms of four lonely officers; more especially of Ferrers whom Karen is soon worshipping. Then the torpedo trials go wrong, stupid men complain of their wastefulness, and the Admiralty is turning fractious and threatens to stop the work, which means breaking Ferrers's heart if not his career. With a neat twist of invention Karen comes to the rescue, or rather she brings to the rescue a Civil Lord who is wiser than the Naval ones. All seems to be well for the future of mankind as well as for the lovers.

That after all is only the shell of the story. Within are the voices of Ferrers and Karen, who can discuss the metaphysics of single-mindedness and the relations of life and love to mathematics with an eloquence which does not forget theatrical values. They occasionally go on too long, especially at the end of the second act. But whenever you suggest a cut to a dramatist you inevitably mention the passage he likes best. So let the Amorous Wranglers be. Ferrers is an amazing person who can invent a torpedo or discuss "the flashing stream" of mind, with a mystical distaste for reason's chains comparable to that of Emily Brontë, whose poem, "The Prisoner," he nearly paraphrases. By any "type-casting" Mr. Godfrey Tearle is miles away from so volatile a mind, so tense and nervous a personality. But Mr. Tearle is an actor who can transcend type; he fights his way into the queer soul of Ferrers, commands his audience, and finely sustains the play, while Miss Margaret Rawlings is matching her subtlety with his strength and holds one continually by her wise blending of brain and blood in the nature of Karen. If Ferrers sets one thinking of Emily Brontë, there is something in Karen to remind us of John Donne. Mr. Felix Aylmer is an admirable tenant of the First Lord's chair; Miss Marda Vanne has a personality far too pleasant for the appalling woman she ingeniously presents. The officers may all be recommended for distinguished service. One hopes, by the way, that the British Admiralty is not really so incapable of seeing an argument which appears simple enough even to a non-nautical and non-mathematical mind. But all the part of the play about the invention is lucid and exciting a virtue rare in plays about inventions. Rarities, indeed, are common in this most uncommon piece, in which mathematics become a Tenth Muse, while Algebra and Venus rise together from Britannia's waves.

—Ivor Brown, *The Sunday Observer*

Geneva

(George Bernard Shaw—Malvern Festival)

There is nothing in *Geneva*, Mr. Shaw's new play produced at Malvern, which Mr. Shaw has not said before and said more amusingly. The time for stretching out new social doctrines, apparently, is past. Man as a political animal is a failure, and all that can be done is to note the inconsistencies and absurdities into which his attempt to order the world on national lines has landed him.

These are brought out in a trial at The Hague, where the German, the Italian and the Spanish dictators appear to answer a variety of charges. The complaints come from a Jew ruined by anti-Semitism, a South American widow whose husband has been murdered in a revolution, a democratic representative of suppressed Parliamentary minorities, an English Bishop outraged by Communist propaganda in England, and a Russian outraged with equal sincerity by the propaganda of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel in Russia . . .

Geneva in this long last act, is good competent Shaw. But the hoax announcing the end of the world which ends the trial and the farcical stuff of the first two acts come perilously near at times to a long-winded parody of Mr. Shaw's own conventions.

—A. V. Cookman, *The New York Times*

OCTOBER RELEASES

SEE's Choice

Nothing Sacred (United Artists) * *
DIRECTOR: William Wellman
STARRING: Fredric March
Carole Lombard
(Reviewed March)

Judge Hardy's Children (M.G.M.) * *
DIRECTOR: George B. Seitz
STARRING: Mickey Rooney
Lewis Stone

In Old Chicago (20th Century-Fox) *
DIRECTOR: Henry King
STARRING: Alice Faye
Tyrone Power
Alice Brady
(Reviewed April)

Three Comrades (M.G.M.) *
DIRECTOR: Frank Borsage
STARRING: Margaret Sullavan
Robert Taylor
Franchot Tone
(Reviewed August)

Yellow Jack (M.G.M.) *
DIRECTOR: George B. Seitz
STARRING: Robert Montgomery
Virginia Bruce
Lewis Stone
(Reviewed August)

Other Releases include

The Drum (United Artists)
DIRECTOR: Zoltan Korda
STARRING: Sabu
Raymond Massey
Valerie Hobson
(Reviewed May–June)

Cocoanut Grove (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Alfred Santell
STARRING: Fred MacMurray
Harriet Hilliard

We're Going to be Rich (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Monty Banks
STARRING: Gracie Fields
Victor McLaglen
(Reviewed July)

Joy of Living (R.K.O. Radio)
DIRECTOR: Tay Garnett
STARRING: Irene Dunne
Douglas Fairbanks, jr.
(Reviewed August)

Cassidy of Bar Twenty (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Les Selander
STARRING: William Boyd
Russell Hayden

There's Always a Woman (Columbia)
DIRECTOR: Alexander Hall
STARRING: Joan Blondell
Melvyn Douglas
(Reviewed September)

Managing Director :
DONALD TAYLOR

★

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At the Venice Exhibition

Strand Films : FIVE FACES, WATCH AND WARD IN THE AIR, MONKEY INTO MAN

T.I.D.A. Films (Produced by Strand): THE BRITISH NAVY, OF ALL THE GAY PLACES

At the Malvern Festival

At the Malvern Picture House Pageant of British Films, all the shorts were Strand Films
ZOO BABIES, MITES AND MONSTERS, ZOO AND YOU, WATCH AND WARD IN THE AIR, LONDON WAKES UP

At the British Association

Special show of MONKEY INTO MAN, MITES AND MONSTERS

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Music from CONQUEST OF THE AIR (*Produced by Strand for London Films*)
Music from ANIMAL LEGENDS (*Strand Film Zoological Productions*)

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THE CAPTIOUS TITLE WRITER

Title writing passed out as a major industry with the coming of sound.

Its refugees find work in dubbing films for export to foreign countries and in titling foreign films for American audiences.

But in the case of dubbed foreign films translations are not always exact.

TEN years ago and more, when the cinema had not yet attained speech, title writers such as Anita Loos and John Emerson, were the reigning Hollywood literati of the day. With baroque rhetorical flourishes they inserted Macaulayesque sentences into the mouths of babes and sages alike. They were a prolific and polysyllabic tribe, these caption scriveners, much too hardy to be beaten into submission by the invention of a mechanical gadget such as sound. Many of them turned to scenario writing, where they had to confine themselves to such monosyllables as could adequately be pronounced by the actors and actresses who had hitherto performed with their facial muscles, elbows, hands and knees. Others turned to the even less satisfactory task of writing titles for quasi-epic sound films which were nothing more or less than a lengthy series of protracted stills illustrating such nostalgic subtitles as "Napoleon's Retreat from Moscow—Dead and Dying litter the Steppe," or "Civil War—a Nation Sundered by Strife."

To-day the lost art of title writing has passed chiefly into the hands of those who superimpose captions on domestic films for showing in foreign countries. Each of the major Hollywood companies has its own title writers, for most American films intended for exhibition abroad are titled, only a few outstanding productions being laboriously dubbed with a new, foreign-language sound track. Likewise in New York City there are a few specialists who title foreign films for American consumption.

Superimposed titles to-day have almost entirely overcome the national limitations of sound films. The greater part of audiences frequenting foreign picture houses do not comprehend the language spoken in the picture. A good titling job, it is estimated, combined with the pictorial images on the screen, transmits 75 per cent of the value of the original and this figure increases or decreases with the lack of talkiness or talkiness of the film. The great problem of the title writer is to give as much of the dialogue as possible, without detracting from the visual.

The titler is always bound by the stringent mechanical requirements of the individual celluloid frame with which he works. First the foreign dialogue sheet of the film is translated and submitted to the censor board. In case of censorial deletion of certain scenes, the title writer subsequently attempts to incorporate the gist of these into his titles so as to effect smooth transition. A recent instance of censor trouble, in its application to titling, was seen in *Club de Femmes*, where one of the scenes showed Danielle Darrieux in illicit liaison with her lover, and the title represented them as about to be married. The censors let the scene pass but specified that the title should uphold morality and virtue, since most of the audience would understand the caption and not the French dialogue.

Armed with this dialogue script and a positive print of the film, the title writer goes into a huddle with a moviola, a small, movable projector on which the film image is seen under a magnifying glass and the sound heard from a small speaker. The glass can be lifted to allow the operator to mark the film with red grease in order to indicate the position of the title. On the moviola, the title-writer runs a portion of the film, determines where a title is necessary and what words it is to comprise, and indicates this on the film by a number which corresponds to the proper caption on his title chart. This procedure is known to the trade as "spotting."

The length of time a title is held on the screen is determined by the formula of approximately two six-letter words requiring a foot of film. The average length of a title is five feet, equivalent to about four seconds of screen time. The words superimposed on the screen must co-ordinate as much as possible with the spoken words, that is, begin and end at approximately the same time that the speaker does, and this is where most of the brain-twisting comes in. The average output of a title-writer is fifteen captions per hour, and since the usual film of eight reels has about 450 titles, the work consumes at least thirty hours.

FROM the title-writer, the marked film proceeds to a processing laboratory together with the completed list of captions. Each separate title is imprinted in white on a black ten by twelve inch card, which is photographed on to negative film for the specified amount of time it is to be held on the screen. This negative, with the titles in black on a white background, is co-ordinated with the pictorial negative of the film, both are run off together on a printing machine, and the result is a positive print with the titles in white at the bottom of the screen image.

The average cost of such a title negative is $500, but titles may be superimposed directly on a positive film without resorting to this expensive process. The titles are printed directly on the film celluloid, the silver emulsion is washed from the imprint, leaving the words in white.

Among recent films, *Symphony of Young Love*, a Czechoslovakian picture with 180 titles had the least, and *La Kermesse Héroïque* with 490 had the most. Probably the all-time record for maximum titles is held by *The Lower Depths*, which had 670 unusually lengthy captions.

E. G.

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•John Henry Sweet dream man of the South

•Newest swing records reviewed by STAN PATCHETT

Maxine Sullivan (*Courtesy of the Melody Maker*)

JOHN HENRY is the sweet dream man of the south.

Even the realists are not allowed to have a clear vision of John Henry, whose private life would take the kind of explanation even Alistair Cooke would find difficult to gloss over in those smoothly flowing sentences of his.

I lived in New Orleans for awhile and John Henry became a very real person to me.

Any big buck with the reputation of being a crack jockey among easy riders and strength enough to do twice as much work as his puny rivals is called "John Henry".

Louis Paul had John in mind when he wrote his prize-winning short story "No More Trouble for Jedwick".

Gilmore Millen actually used him as his chief character in that fine book, "Sweet Man."

There is a work song about John Henry used by railroad gangs when driving spikes. Like most work songs, it is also sung on social occasions.

Man against machine is the theme of the ballad of John Henry.

The greatest steel driver in the deep south, his reputation is threatened when the railroad company he works for installs a steam drill.

Refusing to believe that his granite body will let him down he challenges the iron monster to a spike-driving contest, and asks his boss for a 9lb. hammer, saying that if he has a good hammer he can beat the steam drill driving.

The lyric describes the contest:

John Henry driving on the right-hand side,
Steam drill driving on the left,
Says, 'fore I'll let your steam drill beat me down
I'll hammer my fool self to death.
Hammer my fool self to death.
John Henry told his Captain
When you go to town
Please bring me back a nine-pound hammer
And I'll drive your steel on down.
And I'll drive your steel on down.
John Henry told his Captain,
Man ain't nothin' but a man,
And 'fore I'll let the steam drill beat me down
I'll die with this hammer in my hand,
Die with this hammer in my hand.
Now the man that invented the steam drill,
Thought he was mighty fine.
John Henry drove his fifteen feet,
And the steam drill only made nine.
Lawd, the steam drill only made nine.
John Henry was hammerin' on the mountain,
And his hammer was strikin' fire.
He drove so hard till he broke his poor heart,
Then he laid down his hammer an' he died.
Lawd, he laid down his hammer an' he died.

Alistair Cooke sadly bemoans the fact that once Bing Crosby sings "*Home on the Range*" it ceases to be a folk song.

This is not the case with the Brunswick recording of "John Henry" by *The Spencer Trio*, which consists of Billy Kyle, piano; Buster Bailey, clarinet, and O'Neil Spencer, drums and vocal, because "John Henry" is one of the most tuneful of all work songs, so it curbs the desire of the performer to make those slight melodic changes (almost unconsciously at times) that makes it easier for Mrs. Joe Listener, who has been brought up on a diet of "The Little Boy that Santa Claus Forgot" and "When the Mighty Organ Played Oh, Promise Me", to understand.

O'Neil Spencer uses no vocal tricks in recounting the saga of John Henry. He might have sung a few more verses, but that's only a slight quibble.

On the other side of the record, the Spencer Trio swing softly into "*Afternoon in Africa*" which proves to be the exact opposite of its pretentious title. Definitely a record to have. The number is Brunswick 02632–A.

* * *

CURRENT vocal sensation in America to-day is little coloured girl, Maxine Sullivan, who rode high to fame when she came swinging through the rye with her low down versions of famed Scotch ballads, "Loch Lomond" and "Annie Laurie".

It all started when she was playing piano with an unknown jazz band in Pittsburgh. One night the leader asked shy Maxine if she'd sing a chorus of Joyce Kilmer's famous dirge, "Trees."

"Only God can make a lil 'ole tree", Maxine sang softly, stressing a subtle rhythm that suggested swing without the sand blasting.

The audience didn't like it at first, but suddenly caught on to what the kid was getting at and from that moment the little blackbird was made.

Maxine Sullivan has no phonograph at her snug flat high up on Sugar Hill in Harlem. She doesn't know one swing record from another, her whole life being wrapped up in the songs she sings and singing.

She's recently added, "It Was a Lover and His Lass" to her repertoire, and would like to do "Roamin' in the gloamin' " if Sir Harry Lauder would give her permission. She feels sure he would if he heard her sing it just once.

At long last Maxine Sullivan heeds the call of Harlem and sings the weariest, and most stirring of all blues—"The St. Louis Blues", in her newest H.M.V. recording B. 8789.

She sings it as only Harlem can—till the stars go out and the tune is pounding around in your head.

Last month I wrote in this magazine that W. C. Handy didn't write "The St. Louis Blues". It's a story I've heard many times in America and believed.

In the September issue of the Chicago musician's paper, "Down Beat", W. C. Handy, grand old Father of the Blues, defends himself on this and many other points connected with the origin of jazz. After reading this article I'm convinced that his claims are right and just, and I take pleasure in withdrawing my misinformed words.

* * *

SLOWLY but surely, top flight bands seem to be swinging back to melody. Quite a large proportion of this month's swing records are based on catchy melodies, instead of being sadly reminiscent of "Christopher Columbus":

Eddie South (*Violin solo*). "Eddie's Blues"; "Sweet Georgia Brown" (H.M.V. B.8778).

This comes out of the H.M.V. September catalogue, but it is so outstanding that I feel I have to include it in the October review. Very few negroes take up the fiddle successfully and there are few really great jazz fiddle players anyway. Eddie South is not only the greatest jazz fiddle player, black or white, but also one of the most thrilling players you have ever heard—straight or jazz. Accompanying him on both sides is that colossal swing technician of the guitar, Django Reinhardt.

Dicky Wells and His Orchestra. "Bugle Call Rag"; "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" (H.M.V. B.8799).

Who said they couldn't record swing music in Europe? This pick-up band led by swell trombonist, Dicky Wells, with Europe's No. 1 trumpeter, Bill Coleman, and a bunch of boys from Teddy Hill's band which played in "The Cotton Club" show at the Palladium this year (remember?), recorded these two sides in Paris and the result is far better than the average American counterpart. The orchestration for "Devil and the Deep" is the same used by Teddy Hill to accompany those tap-dancing fools, the Berry Bros., in their act.

Count Basie and His Orchestra. "Sent for You Yesterday and Here You Come To-day"; "Swinging the Blues" (Brunswick 02619-B).

The newest aristocrat of swing offers two numbers typical of the band. "Sent for You Yesterday", a composition by the leader, is the best side, with Basie really giving out on piano and some fine tenor sax work by Lester Young. The other side is based on a well-worn riff out of an old Don Redman tune called "Hot and Anxious" and keeps giving you the impression that you've heard it all before.

Lionel Hampton and His Orchestra. "Piano Stomp"; "Drum Stomp" (H.M.V. B8800).

Perspiring showman, Lionel Hampton, who, like killer-diller drummer Gene Krupa, is viewed by the swing die-hards with artistic suspicion, plays a mess of horse's teeth and plenty of drums in place of his usual vibraphone, with a hand-picked band from Benny Goodman's orchestra. Discovered by B. G. leading a small band in a negro dance hall in Los Angeles, Hampton was whisked East to be the first coloured swing star featured publicly with a white band.

Benny Goodman and His Orchestra. "Wrappin' It Up"; "Big John Special" (H.M.V. B8798).

Stocky, Jewish Benny Goodman, America's King of Swing, who has been playing this kind of music since he was a kid in short pants hanging around the Mississippi river boats, guides his 1938 stream-lined band through two typical modern numbers. Songwriter, Irving Berlin, has prophesied that swing will die a natural death inside two years, but swing —which represents the very best in jazz—has been going for nearly thirty years and survived many similar statements by people who condemn it because they don't understand it.

Teddy Wilson and His Orchestra. "You Can't Stop Me from Dreaming"; "Mon Homme" (Vocalion Swing Series S. 186-B).

Billie Holiday, the Spencer Tracy of swing music, succeeds in making "My Man" sound like a cry from the heart instead of just another French song in still another French revue. A killer diller tempo—main weakness of most swing bands to-day—spoils the other side and blots the copy book of sensitive pianist, Teddy Wilson, famous for his good musical taste.

Bob Crosby and His Orchestra. "Grand Terrace Rhythm"; "At the Jazz Band Ball" (Decca F.6754).

One of those rarities—a white band that meets the negro musician on his own ground. Deliberately playing in the old Dixieland marching groove, Bing's brother Bob leads one of the most refreshing bands in jazz to-day. "Jazz Band Ball" is featured in the recent short this band made for Paramount. Fletcher Henderson wrote and recorded "Grand Terrace Rhythm" ten years ago, and the new recording has faithfully retained all the genius of the original.

Hot Lips Page and His Orchestra. "Down on the Levee"; "Old Man Ben" (Vocalion Swing Series S.197-A).

Not everybody's meat, but the real thing in low down twelve-bar blues. Trumpeter "Lips" Page blows 'em high, wide and handsome strictly in the Louis Armstrong tradition, and sings such engaging lyrics as: "Head like a monkey . . . feet like a bear . . . mouth full of tobacco juice . . . squirtin' it everywhere!" in an off key voice that would sound just right around three in the morning with a load aboard.

Coleman Hawkins and Freddy Johnson. "Star Dust"; "Well, All Right Then!" (Vocalion S.123-A).

Ask any swing musician who the greatest tenor sax player in the world is and he's bound to reply "The Hawk". With a head full of dreams and a tone that makes straight musicians shudder, the Hawk will get you if you don't watch out and then you'll start collecting everything he's ever played on.

"Star Dust" is a marihuana dream of Hoagey Carmichael's and "All Right then!" is a typical expression used by a swing musician as he feels himself being sent by the music.

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NINO MARTINI'S WEDDING . . .

a letter from Venice

NEITHER the splendour of the Scaligere Tombs nor the vicinity of Lake Guarda's enchanting banks are sufficient attraction for intensive tourism, and Verona remains a provincial, dignified town. A peaceful Austrian atmosphere seems to prevail even though Austrian rule only lasted fifty-two years and the Austrian barracks are crumbling down into a belt of uninteresting ruins.

But for a few weeks every year Verona has to play its part in the Fascists' drive to intensify the tourist traffic. The arena, "the best preserved Roman arena in the world", is used for an opera season. And during my holidays I went there like many others. The audiences there are as beautiful to watch as the spectacles themselves. During the long intervals, which might be exceedingly dreary, while ponderous sets are painfully carried by hand, there suddenly emerges, all around you, a most vivid and impressive vision of a Roman crowd. It is certainly better than the painfully reconstructed efforts of *Ben Hur* or *Scipione l'Africano*.

But opera has its own rights, and when, during the last act of "La Favorita" the real moon came out in the melodramatic sky, behind the dimly lit set of the cloister, the crowd was so still and so moved that one could hear the short breathing of the dying operatic star trying to make everybody forget her round figure in a brave effort to die a romantic death. . . .

Those are certainly "circenses" in the best sense of the word.

After the show I went like all my fellow tourists to my hotel, the "Colomba d'Oro", to get a well-deserved rest. I had, in the afternoon made the most exhausting visit to the Scaligere Castle trying with great conviction to look at as many good pictures as I could in its innumerable succession of halls, full as they are.

The opera season was nearing its end. One could already feel the town getting back to its own quiet life. Deals in wine from the rich land around, and a "peach-fair" which, like everything else in Italy, seemed to be an excuse to sing "Giovinnezza", the poorest amongst their songs. Next morning we set out early to finish our tour. There is the theatre, and the cathedral still to see.

There is also, of course, Juliet's tomb. The same nineteenth-century inspiration that drove Prince Albert to design the Scottish tartans and some less famous Frenchman to imagine for the Bretons their "picturesque" or "quaint" costumes, picked up somewhere this heavy Roman sarcophagus and brought it to a cave near the "very convent where Friar Lawrence lived".

The affluence of English and American tourists, composed, I imagine, mostly of spinsters, provided the means of restoring the old and, alas, rather indifferent cloister and of installing some electric lamps in the cave that

(*Continued on page* 275)

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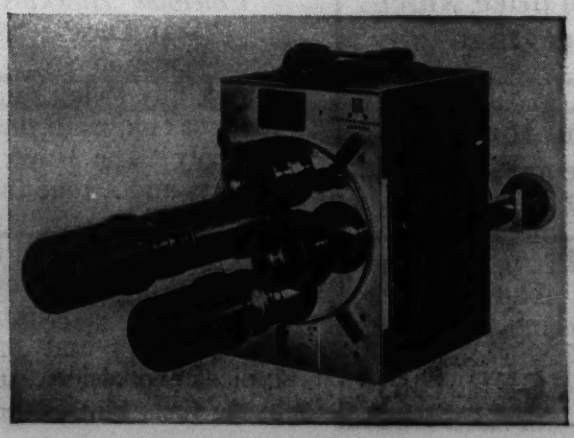

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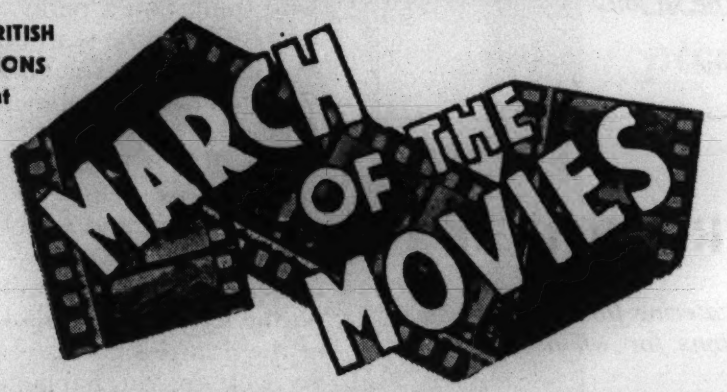

THE STORY OF MOTION PICTURES— THEIR BIRTH AND GROWTH FROM THE THAUMATROPE TO MODERN SUPER PRODUCTIONS

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Conceived by **JOHN ARGYLE**

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P. L. Mannock, *Daily Herald*, says:

"Film sentimentalists will love this interesting survey of the past . . . I cannot imagine any audience failing to find fascination in this compilation."

Released by A.B.P.C.

Nino Martini's Wedding—*cont.*

give to the tomb "the most suitable scenic effect".

By twelve o'clock the very promising spaghetti was waiting at the "Golden Dove" and we rushed there expecting a quiet meal, followed by a reasonable siesta.

A surprise was waiting there: Verona's local boy who made good, Nino Martini, was having his wedding-lunch.

I COULD have a good look at him sitting contentedly by his home-made bride, behind huge bunches of suitable white flowers, very respectable indeed in his best clothes and perhaps a trifle bourgeois looking.

Outside a few zealous Fascists in uniform tried hard to get busy and take a prominent part in the event. Some ordered about the few modest cars of the local guests. Others, belonging to a kind of sect called G.U.F. took 9 mm. shots of the proceedings.

The Hollywood glamour girls didn't succeed after all in making the local boy forget his girl although she didn't possess half as much "yumph". A small but rightly appreciative audience gathered outside the hotel: a few girls, a few more children. It was all very intimate and in keeping with such a sensible matrimonial scheme. With good latin restraint they didn't cheer or applaud when bride and bridegroom entered their nuptial car. Odd luggage, hastily loaded by casual porters and a few presents hastily re-packed . . . Honeymoon begins for a star. . .

But Hollywood film people and press agents don't miss such good opportunities! Telegrams, dozens of them, handled by harassed and ragged messengers, kept pouring into the "Colomba d'Oro" long after the couple had left. "Congratulations Nino".

We had to hurry to catch a train. Another film event was to be witnessed by us at the Lido! "The Venice Film Festival." Something funny this time.

Nothing as intimate as Nino Martini's wedding, but serious official stuff. At the Excelsior, Sabu attending the British Gala Dinner.

And now being back at work, I see that Leslie Howard got half a prize for his acting. It is certainly nobody's fault if he got anything at all.

A. De C.

FILM GUIDE

NOTE: *Owing to the enormous number of bookings for short films we have been compelled to omit our usual Shorts Film Guide. So great is the success of Strand's 'Zoo Films', and the G.P.O.'s 'North Sea' that it would need seven or eight of our pages to give the October bookings for these films alone. Interested readers can obtain bookings by writing to us.*

Snooks' Probe

The kiddies are in the news just now. Commissions and conferences are debating the effect of films on those of tender years. Greybeards who have never seen a film since Ponting lectured at the Philharmonic Hall ("Films were *Films* then, Sir") mumble their platitudes from the Bench and all (as old Chas. Dickens remarked) is gas and gaiters.

The Cockalorum editor, who still has a spark of decency left in his gin-sodden Psyche, has instituted his own first-hand investigation of this vital subject, and has entrusted it to his ace reporter, Snooks ("Sans Peur et sans Reproche") Greiser.

A few interviews with leading tots (apart from those whose butlers or buddies Snooks failed to bribe) are the first fruits of this soul-stirring probe.

Master Ffolliot Ffoljambe, aged 9, *of Mayfair*. "I only go to see Freddie Bartholomew. My aunt likes him. Besides, there's always a pretty good chance of seeing Mickey Rooney give him a poke in the snoot." (At this point the major-domo intervened.)

Doris Phlop, aged 11, *of Tooting*. "I *love* Carole Lombard, Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Deanna Durbin, Kay Francis, Ginger Rogers, Dorothy Lamour and Charles Laughton."

Snitch Jenks, age 14, *of Hoxton*. "Katherine Hepburn is the only woman in my life."

The Right Rev. the Bishop of Much Tutting, aged 85. "To me the cinema is a shrine for the innocent girlhood of Shirley Temple and Jane Withers."

(Ed.: "Ought the Bishop to be in this?"
Snooks: "Second childhood, you mutt."
Ed.: "Okay, okay, I only asked.")

LAMENT

Laurel and Hardy
were the life of the pardy
They had finer witz
than the brothers Ritz
and were more to be enjoyd
than Harold Lloyd
and were just as good larx
as the Brothers Marx
and made Our Gang
look like an also rang
Wherefore we reproach
Hal Roach
and Laurel
for their quarrel
and we feel that Ollie
can never be so jolly
a man
without Stan.

OBITER DICTUM

The film is now catering for the same vulgar unimaginative millions for whom the B.B.C. caters.

S. P. B. MAIS

Women who captivate the most sought-after males do not conceal the fact that they are mentally far above the average.

GEORGE BRENT

Smack in the Eye from Alexander Pope
"Ye little stars, hide your diminished rays!"

We're Class, we are

Here we are, the Girton Girls,
With red flannel bloomers and cultured pearls,
We have funny ways
With our pince nez
We prate of Freud
and are never annoyed
by an offer of Tea
with a Wrangler-to-be
and never averse
to uncensored (or worse)
plays from the Slav
For all of us have
the same object in life—
to end up as the wife
of a handsome Adonis—
so pack up you phonies,
who think that a perm
will entangle the worm
For here we are the Girton Girls
With red flannel bloomers and cultured pearls.
Looks we despise
We're all very wise
and all of us speak
the best Latin and Greek
and we know that the soul
is worth two of that mole
on the left shoulder-blade
of the prettiest maid.
So pack up, you flappers
you chocolate box wrappers,
and cede pride of place
to the really quaite nace
virgins of virtue
(Spengler can't hurt you)
and allow that our knowledge
(all paid for at college)
Will hook a Clark Gable—
and that's more than you're able.
So here we go, the Girton Girls
With red flannel bloomers and cultured pearls.

They're Open!

Hurrah for Hoke!

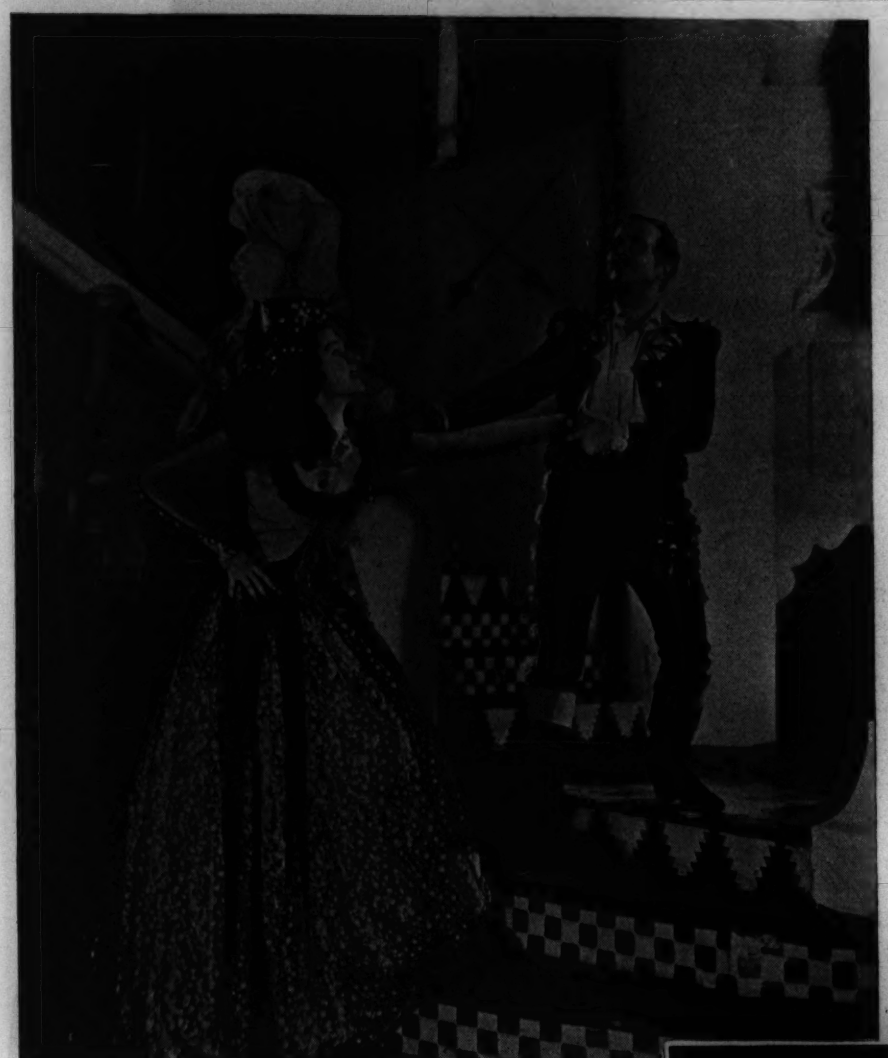
Good old hoke,
It really is a joke,
The loving way they lap it up,
The movie-going folk.
Give 'em ham,
And they don't give a damn—
Just serve the mob a corney job
And watch the tunstiles jam.

For satire is a flat tyre
And subtlety, it stinks:
Intelligence a grave offence,
Reality a jinx.
Bring on your hammy Mammy,
Your Blonde, your Boy, your Sin
They're old, we know, but so B.O.
They always *pack 'em in.*

(*Continued in col. one of next page*)

LORUM

arlos Marsden



"Standing room at 3/6— this way please"

HOT NEWS

Two professors have succeeded in boiling an egg merely by subjecting it to intense sound.

While only too anxious to avoid the more obvious wisecracks, we would like to suggest that enterprising managers might serve raw Hamburgers to their patrons during Joe E. Brown films.

* * *

The Hollywood version of "Wuthering Heights" is to be called *Wuthering Heights*, announces the *Times*. It must be based on that Brontë novel—you know—the one where Fredric March strangles the polar bear.

POLICE SEEK
EXOTIC WOMAN
—Newspaper Headline.

What makes them think they're exceptions?

Hurrah for Hoke!

(*Continued from previous page*)

You'll observe
That no one has the nerve
To dish 'em out a pic. without
A lavish load of Lurve.
Though it tells
Of war and blood and shells
Behind the bomb effects there waits
A guy with wedding bells.

For satire is a flat tyre,
Finesse a total loss,
What isn't slop is just a flop
Where Box Office is boss.
Uncork the same old hokum
The public thirst to quench—
A flash of wit, a subtle bit?—
Aw, leave that to the French.

JAM ON IT

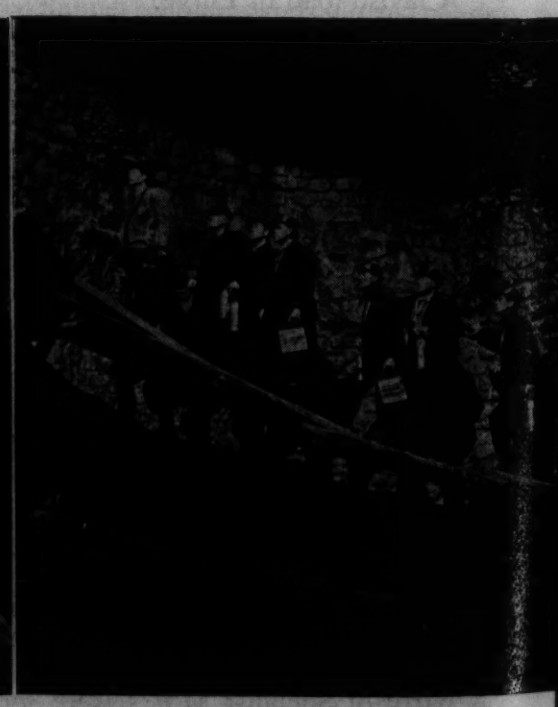
The roadway outside the Houses of Parliament was strewn inches thick with jam when hundreds of jars fell from a passing lorry.

A party of Socialist M.P.'s were soon on the scene, picking out the raspberries for presentation to Mr. Chamberlain.

"What—no elephants?"

No patients and bills mounting. Dr. Manson finds a mining village practice hard going.

"You can't expect no fancy cooking here."



The rescue party on its way, Dr. Ma leading them round a disused shaft.

THE CITADEL

Eagerly awaited film of Dr. Cronin's famous book is nearing completion. Robert Donat and Rosalind Russell discuss their parts.

WHEN Robert Donat was given the chance to play the part of the doctor in Cronin's *The Citadel*, he welcomed it as an opportunity to get away from romantic parts to something real, a modern British story.

"I saw in it a chance to do a real character study, and for three weeks without a break I worked and liked it because I felt there was something real in it", he said. It is the first large production of a modern story set in this country, and he hopes that it will lead the way to many more films of British people of to-day.

The story has been done conscientiously as far as the censor will allow, Mr. Donat thinks. The background is true, the Welsh miners and their wives are faithfully portrayed, the heroine really wore the clothes of a country doctor's wife. "I was allowed to be rough, brusque, a bit of a bumpkin treading on everyone's toes, and there was no attempt to make me look romantic and pull a curl down over my forehead", he said. "I was in Wales for three days, and went into the miners' homes to see how they live. I saw a surgery the like of which I would not have believed existed."

Mr. Donat believes this film has put some real people on the screen without compromise. The atmosphere of the distressed areas of Wales is there, the miners with their pitiful diseases and narrow lives, the doctor in his struggle against poverty, ignorance and prejudice.

Taking the doctor as an individual facing his own problems, he saw in him a blundering young fool, with high ideals, generous heart and rough Scots exterior, who, if he had not been essentially weak in some spot or other, in spite of all social evils, and red tape handicaps, would have won through to his idealistic goal. "The problem was, as I saw it," he said, "Dr. Manson's personal problem, which, if attacked by someone with more personal charm, might have been easily overcome."

It is thought that one part where there is some doubt of the censor is a scene where the young doctor has brought a child into the world, discovers the child is lifeless, and, working until the sweat drops off his brow and the room goes black before his eyes, he brings life into the child's choked lungs by plunging it from hot to cold water.

"Having taken the young doctor, and presented his struggle first as a love story second as a struggle against many difficulties in the way of red tape and lack of money, I followed the character portrayal through to the degradation of the doctor to bring him to life again when he returns to all his old principles.

"I hope to have many other chances to do real character studies in good British pictures", said Mr. Donat. "I would rather play to an original script, but have no particular subject in mind at the moment. If I had my choice of novels, I would choose *Precious Bane* by Mary Webb."

MISS ROSALIND RUSSELL plays the principal female character in the book—Christine, the doctor's wife. Miss Russell, who has come from Hollywood to take this part, is not English but her accent is not obtrusively American, and she is generally regarded by audiences as the "English type". Interviewed on the part she plays Miss Russell described it as the characterisation of a good wife. She thought that Christine was not so much interested in the moral issues of the doctor's career as in the well-being of the doctor himself. The matrimonial difficulties which the two had when Manson became wealthy were due not to the fact that Christine did not take kindly to luxuries, Miss Russell thought, but they were due to her recognition of the fact that the denials of his ideals was causing the doctor unhappiness. As a good wife, therefore, she was anxious that the doctor should return to his ideals and so gain ease of mind. Discussing this issue in a matter-of-fact way Miss Russell insisted that any normal wife would be glad to share in a man's prosperity, and Christine was essentially a normal person.

The doctor reaches the trapped miner and decides that the only way to free him is to amputate his arm.

The wounded miner is brought to the surface by the rescue gang.

"They told me you wouldn't come out." The doctor's young wife greets him on his return.

Television

THE *Radio Times* is a well illustrated journal. Even the announcers have their photographs reproduced. While these bring a certain decoration to the page, I am thinking rather of those excellent if modest montages which set the atmosphere for a talk of a feature programme. When someone is speaking on London a montage of St. Paul's, the Tower and the Houses of Parliament is laced together with the stringing lights of the Embankment. Very often these photographic images eke out the imperfection of mere words. Sometimes the speaker is insetted. The features of S. P. B. Mais set against the Coast of England helped many a listener to enjoy both Mr. Mais and his account of his travels.

Television, too, gives talks. These are of several kinds. There is the lecture, the interview and a delightfully informal broadcast called "Speaking Personally." In the latter a number of well-known broadcasters have spoken. The latest I heard and saw was Mr. Raymond Gram Swing, who has built up an astonishingly large audience in this country with his weekly talks from America. Mr. Swing has one of the best radio voices in two continents. He has an individual intimacy which is winning, and I am glad to report that Mr. Swing has a face which is just as honestly expressive as his voice. Radio has its own brand of It, and Mr. Swing has It. He spoke of New York and three men. In ten minutes he painted as real a picture of the cosmopolitan character of New York as one could hope for, and he also gave word pictures of Mayor La Guardia, Mr. Dewey and Mr. Moses. His pithy sentences conjured up pictures of their problems and their achievements and by a verbal sleight of hand he etched the deportment of these three gentlemen. In all of the ten minutes he talked, Mr. Swing's face was expressive—much more expressive than a picture in the *Radio Times*. But neither the *Radio Times* nor Mr. Swing nor the television producer had an actual picture of Mayor La Guardia, New York City, Jones Beach or the Triborough Bridge. Now I immediately absolve the *Radio Times* and I also absolve Mr. Swing, but I do suggest that the producer of Mr. Swing's talk might have cut in some illustrations.

Had the producer merely asked Mr. Swing to hold up a few postcards or the front page of New York's *Daily News* he would have made the talk as real as Mr. Swing could make it in one's own drawing-room. I have no doubt that if Mr. Swing's talk is reproduced in *The Listener*, the Editor will make use of some such illustrations. Had the producer cut in a few lantern slides he would only have been doing what the Women's Guild have done for the Vicar over the last fifty years. Had the producer cut in some film shots of New York City, of Mr. Dewey, Mr. Moses and Mayor La Guardia, he would have been doing no more than every listener expected. But I do not suppose there was a producer anyway. So one of the best talks

Marcel Boulestin giving a Cookery Lesson—from "And Now."

remained just one of the best talks and Mr. Swing's face one of the best faces, but the broadcast did not even start to be television. This is serious. I suggest that the B.B.C. invite someone with the most repulsive features in Christendom to broadcast a talk on schoolgirl complexion, and see if that will shock their producers into thinking up an alternative image to the speaker's face.

THE most spectacular and probably the most important item at Olympia was not broadcast. This was the get-together of Government, Trade and B.B.C. to discuss the present position and the immediate future of Television. This is a useful precedent which posited some stability to the market situation of receivers. It is also a significant precedent that this united front should speak to the public in no uncertain terms of the future of the television service.

Radiolympia reaffirmed a number of things. First it reaffirmed a wide public interest. Television was the hit of the show. The public were shown that television really has a lot to offer when it tries. Take it on no higher a level than "S.S. Sunshine." This was excellent. It had all the scope and efficiency of a Vitaphone short and on a big set the camera work showed up well. This kind of programme is bound to be the clockwork of television. Something even more interesting was proved and that was the success of what the United States broadcaster calls the "ad lib" programme. Here people from the audience were interviewed without preparation and contrary to all forecasts those who stepped out of the crowd spoke well. They were spontaneous, unaffected, witty and alive. This further proved that television can outpace "In Town To-night" any time it chooses. That certain desperation which attends the lack of script has a life of its own. Radiolympia also demonstrated that the cheap set is no myth. Long heralded the tide has turned and the cheap set is here, displaying astounding efficiency.

PICTURE PAGE is back again. This programme is a seeming veteran with its 150 odd shows. In the heart of these programmes you will find most of the experiments which are likely to set the canon of television. Here the interview technique is being slowly worked out. There have been attempts at illustration. Cartoonists have shown their work; artists have talked about pictures and explorers have shown their trophies. Here and there the paraphernalia of the speaker has allowed him to contribute an item which has been as purely televisional as any critic could wish. This programme might, with advantage to the others which follow, experiment with lighting.

The quality of drama is speedily improving. This has been largely due to the imagination of Fred O'Donovan and Moultrie Kelsall. I can imagine that good dramatic material is not easily come by, but both these men have brought some distinction to one or two very ordinary plays by their imaginative handling and excellent camera control. One day a genius is going to make television sit up and do things. Right now it is still playing the tunes of the theatre, the cinema and the B.B.C. One day it must play its own tune and make its own sweet music. It is ready for a Méliès, a Griffith or a Pudovkin.

THE B.B.C. have just issued a pamphlet reviewing the first year's work on television. It is entitled *And Now* and, after a glance at the galaxy of names, one feels it might equally appropriately have been called *And How*. The list of outside broadcasts includes the Coronation Procession, the Test Matches, Trooping the Colour, the Cup Final, the Olympia Circus, the Boat Race, the Zoo and twice as many again attractive items. It lists the stars of the entertainment world, the Chevaliers, the Fields, the Matthews, the Robeys, the Roys to such a dizzy length that some celestial variety bill is suggested. The drama department lists its amazing selection—*Alice in Wonderland*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *Emperor Jones*, *Ghosts*, Shakespeare, Sheriff and Shaw, Coward, Capek and Kennedy—some fifty top-liners and the actors include some sixty leading lights of the West End. Picture page claims a dazzling array of over a hundred celebrity interviews. From Popeye to Priestley, and Fokine to Foord. Music and Ballet are reviewed as one and it is a pity that this very handsome booklet cannot suggest the super-excellence of the television department's reproduction of music, which has to be heard to be believed.

Thomas Baird